

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 10.30am on Saturday 16 November 2019
at Whittington Village Hall, Whittington, Lichfield WS14 9LR

PRESENT Phil Prettyman (Chair), Richard Booth, Clair Butler, Sue Cawson, David Daines, Kathryn Dodington, Nick Grundy, Mike Harrison, Iain MacTavish, Norman Mitchell, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Rupert Smedley, Laura Sturrock.

In attendance: Jane Charlesworth

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Sarah Edgson, Bernard Hales, Paul Hunter, Sarah Levick, David Lowe, Ian McCarthy, Michael Pinnock, Penny Ross, James Tidy, Amy-Alys Tillson.

2 **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 28 September 2019 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 **COMMITTEE RE-STRUCTURING**

3.1 **New Structure** – Phil circulated an updated structure (appendix 2) which was agreed. Nick thanked Phil for his work on the strategy behind it, as well as creating a diagram clearly showing the new structure.

3.2 **Practical implications** – Phil emphasised that now the new structure was agreed, it was important to implement it and to nominate the 6 Regional Co-ordinators who could continue/begin to recruit local waterways champions to feed in information. There was some discussion how the club's 11 existing Area Reps covering CRT areas would fit into the new pattern, but some had already indicated that they would prefer to be waterways champions (Sarah E, David D, Iain). The following nominations were suggested and those present agreed to hold the posts, at least temporarily, while the new structure bedded in. Phil would contact those not at the meeting* to seek their agreement.

London & South East (*Michael)	Wales & South West (Norman)	East Midlands (Mike)
West Midlands (Rupert)	Yorkshire & North East (*David L)	North West (Nick and *Ian)

In addition, the club had 2 Reps covering EA waters (Bernard and Sarah L) and Phil would contact them to ask if they would become waterways champions instead, feeding information to Michael and Mike respectively. It was emphasised that becoming a waterways champion removed the expectation to attend committee meetings but that written or verbal reports to the relevant Regional Co-ordinator would be welcomed.

Sue would ask Mike Carter's advice on recruiting champions for the Kennet & Avon area.

4 **AGM 2020**

4.1 **Motion to change the constitution** – Kathryn had produced the Notice of Meeting which contained details of the motion, in order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018, to read:

3. MEMBERSHIP

Item (f) to be changed from:

Members shall not disclose to third parties the contents of the membership list supplied to them without the prior written consent of the Committee

To:

It is a condition of membership of the Club that personal data shall be held on a computer system and used within current data privacy laws.

4.2 **Posts due for re-election** – the Notice of Meeting also contained a nomination slip for elections of these posts: Secretary (Kathryn had been elected for one year only, and now needed to fit into the usual 3-year rolling pattern for Officers); Editor (Val did not intend to stand again); Awards Officer (Paul has resigned, see item 8 below); Regional Co-ordinators (see list in 3.2 above).

5 **HNBC Campaign – Save Our Water**

Phil suggested that the campaign be launched officially at AGM 2020, when Adam Comerford (CRT's National Hydrology Manager) had agreed to speak. At the afternoon Social meeting he would ask for questions to be submitted in advance, and Kathryn had made a similar plea in the Newsletter. It was important to have precise

locations with times and dates of particular problems, be they broken paddles, broken or low by-washes, leave-lock-empty notices. Kathryn would collect and collate the questions and would arrange to brief Adam before the March AGM. Sue drew attention to a CRT publication Putting Water into the Waterways which she recommended as advance reading, Ros would send links to the committee and add them to the event details.

Phil asked that each Regional Co-ordinator should prepare a list of trouble spots where water loss or water excess presented a navigation problem and forward it to him. Sue commented that we should also focus on better training for lock volunteers on how to conserve water on flights of locks. Phil would brief Amy and James on the proposed new campaign for the spring edition of NarrowBoat, to coincide as near as possible with the AGM date.

6 Tunnel Transits by out-of-gauge boats

There had been extensive email committee discussions about problems of out-of-gauge boats transiting tunnels, sometimes without pre-booking. Kathryn commented that East Midlands operations staff were now aware of the health and safety dangers posed, bearing in mind the large number of hire boat fleets based in the area. David D added that there was not yet any mobile phone coverage within the tunnels. Mike wondered if such boats in tunnels fell within the club's remit and it was agreed that it did – the H&S aspect for our members' boats in the event of a collision, and damage to the historic infrastructure. David D had compiled a list showing the number of known transits by out-of-gauge boats. Phil wondered if "narrows" could be constructed at access points to designated narrow canals to prevent damage by out-of-gauge boats.

It was agreed that David would bring his list up-to-date and send details of the relevant bye-laws so that Phil could write formally, with a copy of David's list, to Julie Sharman, C&RT Chief Operating Officer, to express the club's concern. It was also agreed that Sue would raise the issue at NAG, which Julie Sharman usually attended. Kathryn would continue to raise the issue with East Midlands Region staff as appropriate.

7 Insurance requirements

Kathryn had obtained permission for only club Officers to have to respond to 5 questions posed by insurers, listed below, and thanked the Officers for having responded quickly.

Ever had a business insurance proposal declined, renewal refused, insurance cancelled, or special terms applied
Ever been convicted of or charged (but not yet tried) or been given an Official Police Caution in respect of any criminal offence other than a motoring offence which are not spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.
In the last ten years been declared bankrupt or insolvent or been the subject of bankruptcy proceedings or insolvency proceedings or been disqualified from being a company director.
In the last ten years been the subject of a County Court Judgement, an Individual Voluntary Arrangement, a Company Voluntary Arrangement or a Sheriff Court Decree.
In the last ten years has your business been subject to an investigation by HM Revenue and Customs which has resulted in a prosecution.

Further questions related to club policies:

Risk assessments which are reviewed as necessary and recorded where there are 5 or more employees or volunteers.
A Health and safety policy which is communicated and reviewed regularly.
A source of competent advice to assist with the management of Health and Safety.
A method of ensuring that Employees are provided with information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure they are competent and aware of workplace risks and the measures used to control them and all such communication and training is recorded as necessary.
Measures to ensure the provision and maintenance of Safe plant including statutory inspections where appropriate.

Sue agreed to send copies of SUFBRS's documentation on Saturn, for comparison; Rupert would enquire about IWA's specialist H&S adviser; Kathryn, Ros and Jane would undertake some further work on club policies, to be discussed again at the next meeting.

8 **Keay & Hemelryk Awards**

Phil had received and acknowledged Paul's resignation as Awards Officer and, as it was coming up to the busy time for the Awards (closing date being 30 November 2019), he had approached David D and Mike for help. David had agreed to take on the role with immediate effect as an interim measure, with Mike's help. Ros had asked Steve to re-direct *awards@* emails to David. No nominations had yet been received, but some candidates were mentioned – one being a wide boat and therefore ineligible. However, it was suggested that a letter of commendation be sent as encouragement. Phil was asked to write again to Paul to express the committee's appreciation of his work both as Secretary and Membership Secretary and latterly as Awards Officer.

9 **Matters arising (Action List updates) from the meeting on 28 September 2019**

- 3.3 Ian had suggested the Tat Auction proceeds be donated to the local IWA working party for enhancement projects on the Rochdale Canal. Agreed, also to make the sum up to £500 from the original £422.90. Laura to follow up.
- 3.3 Iain had not received any details from James, so would sell the melodeon on EBay. Agreed.
- 3.4 Audlem badging. Laura and Richard felt we had had too little control over the Audlem event in 2019 and it was imperative that committee members attended if the club were to badge it for 2020.
- 5 Editorial Board. Phil had not advertised for helpers, he felt it better to wait until after the AGM.
- 6.1 CRT Council. Former "roving traders" were now classified as "private boaters" for the forthcoming election.
- 6.4 After the Social, Ros would amend the website blue banner with a reminder about subscriptions and Standing Orders. In due course, Laura hoped to be able to close the NatWest account when all SOs had been changed to Lloyds.
- 6.4 Membership form. Ros believed that the downloadable version on the website was now correct. Val would work on the print version (3-fold with a narrow front photo) to incorporate GDPR, new rates and club name in full.
- 6.7 Banners. Iain suggested a target price of £100/banner to ensure adequate quality; he proposed 1 impactful photo plus possibly a "mission statement" and web address. He would liaise with Sandra Brenchley Green, designer of several club plaques and our letterhead, and would bring further ideas to the next meeting. Sue commented that Rebekah Parrott might also be able to help, and also suggested obtaining banners pre-assembled rather than in kit form.
- 6.7 DBA - standard format banners for individual boats. Nick had obtained details of a producer and would investigate.
- 8.4 Heritage Advisory Group. Hopefully the group might become more active with the involvement of a newly appointed Heritage & Environment Manager. Sue emphasised the importance of having structures listed and suggested we strongly encourage CRT to be more pro-active.

All other Action Points from 28 September 2019 had been dealt with or were on-going. Older Action Points remained.

10 **WRITTEN REPORTS had been received from the following committee members and are contained in Appendix 1 to these minutes. These reports were taken as read, topics raised are shown in italics. Other discussions and verbal reports at the meeting are listed as bullet points.**

- 10.1 **Chairman** (Phil Prettyman) – *red diesel, engine emissions, cancelled NINF meeting, CRT Council elections nomination, Editorial Board, Awards Officer.*
 - Phil reminded members that it had been agreed at the September meeting that reports should be sent well before the meeting. Late reports risked being missed by members travelling some distance prior to the meeting.
- 10.2 **Secretary** (Kathryn Dodington) – *AGM speaker confirmed, club insurance, regular meeting with CRT CEO*
 - Richard Parry had offered monthly meetings with club Officers. It was thought that quarterly meetings would be sufficient and Phil and Kathryn would attend initially. It was important that these be two-way exchanges, not an opportunity to harangue the CEO and Sue reminded the meeting that these could sometimes skew operational priorities in the Regions. David D asked that emphasis be placed on the knowledge and expertise contained within the club that could be put at CRT's service. Jane hoped to become involved with encouraging youngsters to get involved in canals when she moved her mooring to Gas Street.
- 10.3 **Treasurer** (Laura Sturrock) – *cash at bank, expense claims by year end, Tat Auction proceeds donation, Social date options*
 - Social, November 2020 – 14th was the preferred date, 21st as second choice. A speaker was needed. [Post meeting notes: Sarah Hale and Nick Hill had offered to speak on Dickinson's paper mills; Social 2020 date confirmed 14 November]
- 10.4 **Membership Secretary** (Penny Ross) – *no report*

10.5 **Archive** (Richard Booth) – *no report*

10.6 **Newsletter Editor** (Val Roberts) – *comps list update, club property storage, Disappearing Heritage books*

- Val wondered if any of the club materials, listed in her report, could go to the Ellesmere Port archive. Laura believed that if we did so, we would lose copyright on them. Iain would look again at storage options, although his earlier research had indicated that storage at the ex-salt mine facility would have been unsuitable as we had too little material to make it worthwhile – an inventory was needed. Phil thanked Mike & Val for storing the material for so long, and emphasised that we now needed a long term solution. Agenda item for January 2020.

10.7 **Shop** (Clair Butler) – *no report*

10.8 **Navigation** (Sue Cawson) – *NAG Vegetation meeting, stoppage review meeting in Northwich, Beeston Iron lock dispensation, Hurleston update, actual stoppage dates, Big Lock Middlewich footbridge, Pontcysyllte Aqueduct inspection, Saltersford lock, items for next NAG meeting, visit to Toddbrook, EP gathering planning, Toddbrook drop-in days, visits during stoppages*

10.9 **Press** (Amy-Alys Tillson & James Tidy) – *no report*

10.10 **Website** (Ros Prettyman) – *action updates; events calendar, Navigation page updates, discussion forum software*

10.11 **Area Reports:**

East (Sarah Levick) *no report*

East Midlands north (Mike Harrison) *no report*

East Midlands south (Kathryn Dodington) *unbooked wide boats through tunnels, vegetation work, Sculptor docking*

- Kathryn reported that she had a meeting soon with Dan Whyment, E Mids Regional Operations Manager

Kennet & Avon (Nick Grundy) *list of winter stoppages (mostly routine), Harris lock*

London (Michael Pinnock) *stoppages, recruitment of local champions, London rally proposal*

Manchester, Pennines & Potteries north (Ian McCarthy) *summary of nav problem areas submitted to User Forum, Cheshire flight split bridges, CRT Council volunteer election*

Manchester, Pennines & Potteries south (Rupert Smedley) *West Mids user group report, fishing, lack of communication, new role Reactive Response Manager, West Mids Region being split with local ops managers*

North East (David Lowe) *local waterway forum report, major works update, strong stream warning experiment, aggregate delivery permission withheld*

North Wales & Border (Iain MacTavish) *staff changes, upcoming user forum, Wheaton Aston lock, Hurleston lock repair underway, stoppage programme on CRT website*

North West (vacancy)

South East (David Daines) *user group meeting, GU above Berkhamsted “narrow”, leave-lock-empty, vegetation problems, list of unbooked wide boats transiting tunnels, unplanned stoppage at Marsworth*

South Wales & Severn (Norman Mitchell) *no user group meeting, Dock House Gloucester up for sale, interim Regional Director, no list of winter stoppages, nb Northwich deteriorating*

- Norman reported that Mark Evans had just been appointed as Regional Director, having previously held a post in the Museum.

Thames (Bernard Hales) *no report*

West Midlands (Sarah Edgson) *no report*

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Events

London 2021, Regent’s Canal 2020

Michael, Sue and Ray Butler had submitted a proposal for a gathering in London in May 2021. Phil reminded the meeting that he had already been in touch for more than a year with SUSC/Montgomery Restoration about organising a club gathering to coincide with the restoration/opening of School House Bridge in 2021. However, the Monty gathering would not be before August 2021 and probably not until 2022. There was also the 200th anniversary of the Regent’s Canal in August 2020 which might be a more appropriate date. Clair commented that there might be a possibility of a cheaper price for the London venue, although care would have to be taken as it was the local paddle boarders’ depot.

Finance – the proposal asked for a budget of £3,000. Laura commented that Hebden Bridge had cost £1,500 but she recognised that a London venue would be more expensive. She therefore proposed a budget of £2,000. Agreed.

Montgomery School House Bridge 2021

Phil had now heard from SUSC/Montgomery that the bridge opening was likely to be in the later part of the year, so a clash of dates was less likely. Further investigation was needed. Ian had emailed a comment: *School House Bridge. WRG(NW) have volunteered to be in charge for the moment, and all their working parties are centred on the bridge starting in January. The Planning has been passed with lots and lots of tree hugging and general looking after nature rules. The plan is to take about 18months, I believe with Volunteers doing most of the unskilled work, only the bridge trusses and tarmacking being done by paid contractors. The SUCS are working towards Crickbeath and are onto the final 500m section which needs to be dug out, the land drain installed, and then lined, followed by a water test. I'm guessing this will take all of this next year to finish. The next stretch, my guess, is then do to the next winding hole beyond Waen Wen Bridge, which is the bridge beyond School House Bridge, and is about 1400m from Crickbeath so will take SUCS about 3yrs I guess, unless the ground conditions improve, which I suspect they will not. This section was not dry and piped by accident. This would leave about 2.5Km to go to get to the restored section in Llanymynech. C&RT may find a bucket of money which may speed things up. They have had Kears do the last 200m including the wharf at Crickbeath which need pilling because SUCS were not set up to do this sort of thing. John Dodwell (tug Helen) will know a better picture.*

[Post meeting note: Michael explained to Phil that he was unlikely to be able to organise a successful London gathering in 2020 at this short notice and many boaters had already arranged their itinerary for 2020. May 2021 was therefore the preferred date. Ros had emailed Kathryn and Michael copies of the booking forms, risk assessments etc used for Hebden Bridge for reference.]

12 DATES AND TIMES OF NEXT MEETINGS

12 January 2020	10.30am	The Samuel Barlow, Alvecote (Kathryn to check availability) (Sunday - 3 hr morning meeting, Awards discussions in afternoon)
7 March 2020	10.00am	Whittington Village Hall, prior to AGM
14 November 2020	10.30am	Whittington Village Hall, prior to Social

Further dates in 2020 would be chosen at the January 2020 meeting.

The meeting closed at 1:12 pm

Phil Prettyman
Chairman