

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 11.00am on Saturday 28 September 2019
at The Samuel Barlow, Alvecote, Tamworth B78 1AS

PRESENT Phil Prettyman (Chair), Richard Booth (joined during item 5) Clair Butler, David Daines, Kathryn Dodington, Sarah Edgson (up to Item 6), Nick Grundy, Mike Harrison, David Lowe, Iain MacTavish, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Penny Ross, Laura Sturrock, James Tidy.

In attendance: Sue Cawson (whole meeting), Peter Oates, Dave Ross (parts of meeting)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Bernard Hales, Paul Hunter, Sarah Levick, Ian McCarthy, Norman Mitchell, Michael Pinnock, Rupert Smedley, Amy-Alys Tillson.

2 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 2 March 2019 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 CLUB EVENTS

3.1 Social, November 2019 – Kathryn had contacted Mike Constable about his AV requirements. Ros had tea & coffee supplies, Iain or Clair would purchase milk (8 pints) & cake (20). Laura confirmed the hall was booked from 10.00am but there was now a different procedure for obtaining the key.

3.2 AGM March 2020

- **Speaker** - having been discussed by email before the meeting, it was agreed that Kathryn should invite Adam Comerford, CRT National Hydrology Manager, to speak on water supply & management (title to be confirmed) as this would fit well with the club's new campaign. If Adam were not available, it was suggested that Julie Sharman, CRT Chief Operating Officer be invited.
- **Notice of Meeting** – Kathryn would produce the information for Newsletter 2019/4, together with any motions to change the Constitution (see 5.3 and 5.5)

3.3 Hebden Bridge Gathering

- **Finances** - Laura reported that the Tat auction had raised £422 but had yet to be donated to a waterways good cause. Phil would ask Ian for names of suitable recipients working on the Rochdale Canal. The overall cost of the gathering had been £844, with some travelling expenses still to be claimed.
- **Melodeon** - Iain reported that the donated melodeon had been spruced up by David Ray and would be offered for sale on eBay. James would forward contact details of a professional melodeon restorer to Iain.

3.4 Audlem Gathering – the gathering had been badged as a club event, covered by club insurance. If it were to be held again in 2020, the Events Sub Committee would need to take early action to ensure all boats attending belonged to club members as this was necessary for our insurance.

3.5 Coventry, City of Culture 2021 – John Oddy had enquired via Penny if the club would be interested in joining in this event by organising a gathering. Penny was asked to confirm the club's interest and ask for further details. It was thought late May bank holiday would be preferable.

3.6 Montgomery Festival – Clair commented that a likely date for this event was September 2021.

4 AWARDS

4.1 Keay & Hemelryk – it had been agreed at the March 2019 committee meeting that the judging criteria should be clarified if necessary. This would now need to be done for the 2020 awards which would normally be advertised in Newsletter 2020/3. James, Mike and Sarah E agreed to form a working party to make recommendations by January 2020. Kathryn confirmed that she had the stock of mini-plaques to which James would add those in his possession.

4.2 "Lifetime Achievement" Award – in March, it had also been suggested that the club launch a new award to recognise that some boats had been so well maintained continuously that they could not meet the criteria for Keay & Hemelryk nominations. It was agreed to set up a working party to look at all aspects of establishing such an award including time frames, title, trophy, entry criteria (boats or people). Working party volunteers needed, as 4.1 above.

5 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Intro Following Sue Cawson's resignation from the committee by email on 3 July 2019, Phil had taken on board both Sue's dissatisfaction with the way the committee was working, and Michael's disquiet at the water supply situation and his suggestion of a need for a new vigorous campaign. Phil had circulated a number of questions to the committee, had received some email responses (see Appendix 2) and had had several conversations with various committee members over the past few months. He had circulated a paper for discussion (see also Appendix 2) and this formed the basis of the discussion on this agenda item:

5.1 To establish an **Events Sub Committee** to plan future club events. **Agreed.** David L emphasised the importance of continuity and being able to draw on a core of people with experience of organising past events. It was also agreed that the Events Sub Committee should invite other club members with local or particular expertise to join its meetings for specific events as appropriate.

5.2 To establish a **Navigation Sub-Committee** to co-ordinate the club's response to system-wide navigation and maintenance issues. **Agreed.**

- The sub committee to comprise 6 Regional Co-ordinators to mirror C&RT's recent re-organisation and the club's Navigation Officer.
- The Regional Co-ordinators to be a point of contact between C&RT, local Champions and members, to compile a list of pinchpoints and problems, to check and hold C&RT to account on its communications.
- Instead of Area Reps following C&RT boundaries, the Regional Co-ordinators should recruit local Champions to monitor and report on specific canals (see draft in Appendix 2). The Navigation Sub Committee would work to produce a definitive list with nominated Champions and notify the full committee.
- A Champion might adopt several sections if they had the capacity to do so but would not need to attend meetings provided they were in regular communication with the Navigation Sub Committee. An important aspect of this would be to monitor consistency where individual canals cross C&RT regional boundaries. Local Champions' areas would not need to change if C&RT were to re-organise again.
- The sub committee should establish contacts with individuals who had expert knowledge of hydrology, engineering, legal and environmental issues. These would be independent of HNBC but would be trusted sources of relevant knowledge and could remain anonymous if they preferred.
- At David D's suggestion a notice would be placed in the Newsletter, inviting local Champions to come forward. Also possibly a press release.

5.3 To establish an **Editorial Board** to assist the next Newsletter Editor. **Agreed.**

Phil thanked Val on behalf of the committee for the production of the club's newsletter to such a consistently high standard over many years. Val intended to produce NL 2019/4 and NL 2020/1 and to retire from the Editor's post at AGM March 2020.

- Lucy Waldron, who had editorial experience but who was resident in New Zealand for part of the year, had volunteered to take on the role but would require some UK back-up for certain aspects such as proof-reading, despatch and having a nominated address for copy sent by post rather than email. Phil would write to Lucy, thanking her for her offer, and asking if she would like to be added to the committee mailing list immediately, as suggested by Val. The election would take place at the AGM in March 2020.
- Under the club's Constitution, the Editor was one of the 6 Officers of the Club and a signatory for the club's bank account. It was felt unlikely that Lucy would be able to attend many meetings in person and, due to the time difference, it was unlikely that Skype or similar software could be used. A change to the Constitution would be needed to give the committee more flexibility in appointing a bank signatory and another Officer.
- In Lucy's absence, a nominated member of the Editorial Board would attend full committee meetings and present a report.
- Although Clair, Iain, Laura, Peter Oates and David D had already volunteered to help, a notice would be placed in NL2019/4 asking for further volunteers to join the Editorial Board.

5.4 **General provisions for sub committees.** It was **agreed:**

- Each sub-committee to elect its own chair. The chair or a nominated person to report to the full committee meeting.
- Each sub committee to meet at a time and frequency of its choosing.
- Each sub committee to have its own dedicated page(s) on the club website where information to members should be posted. Where appropriate this, or a summary, should be repeated in the Newsletter.
- Each sub committee to decide its preferred method of communication both internally and externally to members and/or the wider public. The club would do its best to facilitate what was chosen.

5.5 The full Committee

- **Composition** – the current committee was rather large and unwieldy and an attempt should be made to streamline its working. Phil produced a schematic (Appendix?) showing a possible relationship between the committee and its sub committees. Sarah E argued strongly that Regional Co-ordinators should be within the Navigation Sub Committee rather than a separate group on the committee. This would then consist of the officers, the sub-committee chairs (or nominated representatives) and other critical contributors (eg Awards, Press Officer, Minutes Secretary and a representative of the Editorial Board), giving 11 members in all compared with the current 24. Penny also commented that the schematic was overly complicated.

(Richard Booth joined the committee at this discussion point)

- **Frequency of meetings**
 - the committee should meet 3 times a year in autumn, winter and spring, usually early October, early January and March.
 - Penny suggested that a brief summer meeting could be called at boat gatherings if sufficient members were present and the meeting were quorate and, although not successful in the past, it was agreed to trial this again with a much shorter agenda and a restricted time limit.
 - an emergency full committee may be called if requested by a majority of committee members, to consider topics such as urgent heritage or navigation issues.
- **Streamlining committee business**
 - meetings to take place on Sundays, but to trial a nominated weekend well in advance and take a poll for Saturday or Sunday nearer the time, always supposing a venue was available at short notice.
 - meetings to last for 3 hours [note: the March meeting could be before the AGM or subsequently]
 - a time allocation for each item to be specified on the agenda.
 - written reports from full committee members to be sent no less than 1 week before the meeting and be taken as read, not explained again at the meeting.
 - one report would be submitted from each sub committee, by either its chair or a nominated representative by rota.
 - critical items raised in the reports to be included in the agenda.
 - exception reporting was acceptable (ie “nothing to report” or “no additional comments”).
 - lunch to be organised either before or after the full committee meetings to allow time for informal discussions.
- As at present, any club member may attend full committee meetings and be involved in discussions, within the time frame of the meeting.

[**Post meeting note** – further consideration by Phil led to him sending another email to the committee regarding the structure of the committee – see Appendix 3 – still under discussion.]

5.6 Campaigns

Intro It was acknowledged that despite C&RT’s national strategy being laudable, its local implementation was seriously flawed (in some regions, but not all). Iain gave examples of where communications were difficult across sub-section boundaries even though those sub-sections were within the same Region. Kathryn reported that East Midlands Region was a good example of where communications were improving. James commented on the patchiness of retained local expertise and the training of volunteer staff. Sarah E commented that 2 moorers had moved from the yard at Glascoate because of low water levels and reports were coming in of low water levels on the S Oxford canal, to say nothing of the recent waterway closures in London due to lack of water.

It was suggested that:

- the club should campaign on issues defined by the full committee. **Agreed**
- a campaign fund be established to support this. Decision deferred.
- the club’s first new campaign should be WATER SUPPLY. **Agreed.**
- Ask C&RT to train its volunteers to walk lengths of canals to try and identify potential problems before they became serious. This could replace their paddle-winding duties at locks.
- James suggested we should publicise the problems to our members and make them aware of C&RT’s staffing limitations, also asking them to consider informally adopting a stretch of canal (see Champions above).
- as a first stage, the committee would identify priority problem areas and publicise via the NL.
- the club should purchase a GoPro camera, or similar, to record video or time lapse progress on a specific canal. Decision deferred.

(Sarah Edgson left the meeting at the end of item 5.6).

6 **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.

6.1 **Chairman** (Phil Prettyman) – *Hebden Bridge & Audlem gatherings; CEO & Trustee boating; meetings attended; Boaters' Rep.*

- Phil reminded the committee that he had been elected to C&RT Council as a Boaters' Representative in 2016 and was now due for re-election for a second term. He also sat on the C&RT Appointments Committee which produced shortlists of candidates as Trustees. The committee agreed that it would support his candidacy for re-election. Phil would produce an article for NL 2019/4 describing what he did as a Boaters' Rep and Nick agreed to introduce and promote the elections at the November Social.

6.2 **Secretary** (Kathryn Dodington) – *paperwork changeover; boat insurance.*

6.3 **Treasurer** (Laura Sturrock) – *total funds; fraudulent SOs; additional bank signatory required; Hebden Bridge expenses claims; proceeds of Tat Auction at Hebden Bridge; collecting key for Social.*

6.4 **Membership Secretary** (Penny Ross) – *16 new members; overall membership numbers; input errors; malfunction of auto email reminders; label problems incompatible software; 44 non-renewals since December 2017 server issues; Standing Orders for increased subs.*

- New members** were approved:

Name	Membership No.	Boat
Darren Roberts	1924	
Mr L & Mrs D Hampshire	1925	Trout
Polly Player	1926	
Mr P and Mrs A Hardy	1927	Ertjie*
Finton Dowling	1928	
Nicola Ellis	1929	
Roger Blagg	1930	
Mr A Pearson & Ms H Marrocco	1931	Kent
Mr K & Mrs J Lodge	1932	Hadar*
Mr D & Mrs J Warsop	1933	Delhi
Mr K & Mrs G Astley	1934	Glendyne*
Mr J & Mrs L Knapp	1935	Zulu*
Malcolm Burge	1936	Jaguar
Maggie French	1937	Water Ouzel
Mr T & Mrs E Beale	1938	Ballinger
Paul Bennett	1939	Lark*

- Subscriptions** - increased subscriptions (£20, £25) agreed at the AGM in March 2019 would come into effect on 1 January 2020 and Standing Orders would need to be amended. Penny proposed putting a new SO form in NL 2019/4 together with an article, a new SO form as a download on the website and reminding members via the website blue band and the club's Facebook page. David D recommended setting a time limit by when renewed SOs would be expected. Laura stated that Direct Debits were quite costly for a small organisation, although they would give the club more control.
- Privacy, GDPR** - Penny queried the club's practice of adding new members' names to NLs which might breach GDPR rules. It was decided to err on the side of caution and cease to do so.
- Membership forms** – needed updating to include new subscriptions, GDPR. Penny would send Val the details and Val would produce a draft. Penny believed the forms on the website were out of date, Ros to send a copy.
- Pressure of work** had meant that Penny was unable to update membership details weekly and would only be able to action these monthly in future. She was arranging to meet Steve to sort out problems.

6.5 **Archive** (Richard Booth) - *nothing to report*

- Archive catalogue** - Richard had made a start and circulated a preliminary list to the committee. There was more work to do on this.

- The original Weaver photographs are presently being stored in the loft at Beggarlee Wharf and were OK there for the time being.
- 6.6 **Newsletter Editor** (Val Roberts) – *thinner paper; cover too dark; reduced print run; comps copies; membership queries; London venue; Secretary report for NL.*
- Mike would send Phil a list of the people receiving complimentary copies of NLs for checking and return.
 - Val wondered if the new Editorial Board would also deal with other club publications. To be decided.
- 6.7 **Shop** (Clair Butler) – *takings at events; proposed discounts to clear stock; Christmas cards stock.*
- It was agreed that the Shop stock should be reduced as suggested by Clair (25% off new stock, half price on 2nd hand books)
 - Ros had suggested (by email) that the club should compile a few sets of promotional material that committee members could display on their boats at gatherings, in lieu of having a Shop presence. **This was agreed** and Clair would investigate.
 - Nick would find out about Dutch Barge Association’s offer to produce individual banners for boat owners.
- 6.8 **Navigation** (Sue Cawson, sent prior to her resignation) – *Rochdale canal problems; poor C&RT communications; London issues; new NAG Mooring group; winter stoppages; NAG Dredging group; website Navigation Notes; wideboats; Aston Lock handrail*
- Toddbrook Reservoir: Sue reported that contrary to some speculative rumours, the drain valve had been opened. James added that the training to become an inspector of reservoirs was rigorous and that 4 of the 9 world-wide experts worked for C&RT. Phil commented that the club had held back from any criticism until the outcome of the enquiry was published, which would identify any systematic shortcomings.
 - The Winter Stoppages list had been out for consultation, had now been confirmed and published.
- 6.9 **Press** (Amy-Alys Tillson & James Tidy) – *nothing to report*
- 6.10 **Website & Social Media** (Ros Prettyman) – *website updates; enquiries via contact form; Facebook posts & queries.*
- 6.11 **External Organisations** – *no reports*
- 6.12 **Area Reports**
- East** (Sarah Levick)
- East Midlands north** (Mike Harrison) *User Forum report; flood gates & flood locks; Aston Lock handrails*
- East Midlands south** (Kathryn Dodington) *wide boats, canoes in tunnels; member of EM RAB; Blisworth tunnel trip; local stoppages; EM staffing; boat trips for C&RT staff; veg growth on tunnel portals; successful VAW event; Sculptor*
- Kennet & Avon** (Nick Grundy) *Harris Lock No 16 reduced gauge; water shortages and pump failures*
- London** (Michael Pinnock) *severe water shortages; lack of response to reporting problems; poor maintenance; inappropriate mooring*
- Manchester, Pennines & Potteries north** (Ian McCarthy) *poor maintenance on Rochdale; Lwr Peak dredging plan; T&M locks tight; Marple reopened; Toddbrook Reservoir .*
- Manchester, Pennines & Potteries south** (Rupert Smedley) *UserGroup meeting; IWA planned heritage survey; Bosley flight repair; IWA AGM at Longton.*
- North East** (David Lowe) *freight tonnage; Leeds Port; Exol Pride oil barge*
- North Wales & Border** (Iain MacTavish) *Hurleston Lock problems; Wheaton Aston lock problem; Saltersford Lock problem; old piling failure between Wrenbury & Marbury; (Sue Cawson) Pontcysyllte; Beeston Iron Lock; Anderton lift repairs*
- North West** (vacancy)
- South East** (David Daines) *nothing to report*
- South Wales & Severn** (Norman Mitchell) *Gloucester Dock Office proposed sale; Llanthony warehouse to contain offices; poor state of Salt Warehouse; towpaths good, bridges failing*

Thames (Bernard Hales) *long delays at self-operated locks; itinerant moorers, overstaying, abuse*

West Midlands (Sarah Edgson) *nothing to report*

7 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ACTION LIST not already in the minutes/reports

Oct '17 **Tunnel Book** – Mike had received some photos from Gordon. It was agreed that the book would have a substantial introduction, lists of boats and then-and-now photos of boats/structures

Oct '18 **Tunnel memories** – Sue would check with Martin Fuller about recordings of Bert Bailey's memories

Oct '17 **Ike Argent memoirs** – Teresa Fuller had transcribed some of the CDs and had a couple more to do. Val to follow up.

Oct '18 **Bank signatories** - Laura would like 5 signatories. Phil to re-visit his access login and password.

Oct '17 **Bryan Nichol** - Richard would follow up Bryan Nichol's archive material.

Jan '18 **Historic properties** – Val had sent photos to Ivor for IWA Committee but emails had bounced.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 **Red Diesel** – Phil had sent a submission to Govt department and had copied it to the committee. He felt the battle was lost to retain red diesel for propulsion on pleasure boats and it was now a matter of white diesel implementation. Hopefully, historic craft might receive an exemption or a longer lead-in time.

8.2 **Emissions** Phil reported that C&RT was consulting on engine emissions. Dept of Transport was leading on this but so far had only consulted inland shipping. He hoped historic vessels, listed on NHS Register, might be granted an exemption.

8.3 **C&RT Communications** Phil had complained bitterly at a recent Boater's Reps meeting about poor communications at C&RT local levels. He had now received a reply from Matthew Symonds (National Boating Manager (Leisure) and had circulated it to the committee prior to the meeting.

8.4 **C&RT Heritage Advisory Group** – no information on its activities, Phil & Sue would follow up.

8.5 **C&RT Winding Holes list** – Sue would try to obtain copy of the list of C&RT-owned winding holes and circulate it to the committee

9 DATES AND TIMES OF NEXT MEETINGS

16 November 2019	10.30am	Whittington Village Hall, prior to the Social
12 January 2020	10.30am	The Samuel Barlow, Alvecote (Kathryn to check availability) (3 hr morning meeting, Awards discussions in afternoon)
7 March 2020	10.00am	Whittington Village Hall, prior to AGM

The meeting closed at 4.00pm

Phil Prettyman
Chairman