

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday 11 May 2013
at Beggarlee Wharf, Horsley Woodhouse, Derbys at 11.00 am

PRESENT: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), George Boyle, Clair Butler, Sue Cawson, Jim Cook, David Daines, Rebekah Fuller (morning session), Sarah Hale, Mike Harrison, Paul Hunter, Iain MacTavish, Norman Mitchell, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Rupert Smedley, Amy-Alys Tillson. Phil welcomed Daniel Mawdsley to the meeting and hoped he would be willing to join the committee as NW area rep.

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Richard Booth, Sandra Green, Bernard Hales, Tom Judd, David Lowe, Alison Smedley, Laura Sturrock.

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

Having corrected item 5.1 to read Newsletter 2013/1 instead of Newsletter 2014/1, the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2013 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 **COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

3.1 **Internal communications within the committee**

The discussion ranged over the importance of a clear and transparent communication system within the committee, of ensuring that relevant information was always channelled to the appropriate committee member, and of committee members ensuring that new threads were started for new topics to aid future searching. Although the importance of face-to-face discussions at meetings was agreed, it was also acknowledged that email discussions were useful. However, decisions taken this way had to be summarised and Phil emphasised that members must include such interim discussions/decisions in their reports to the following committee meeting.

It was agreed that Paul would investigate setting up a free online survey/questionnaire tool, to be used once a month for a trial period of 3 months. All committee members would be asked to respond, and the summary would be ratified and included in the minutes of the following committee meeting.

3.2 **External communications**

It was felt that CRT, in its mission for inclusivity, was now consulting more with non-boating organisations and was increasingly likely to be swayed by the influence of well-organised pressure groups. It was therefore critical that HNBC be more proactive and raise its profile.

It was agreed that a story should be identified at every committee meeting, which Sarah would write up for the Press. Members were asked to channel information to her about disappearing winding holes in the first instance, and to give some thought to further topics.

It was acknowledged that although not everyone used social media such as Twitter and FaceBook, it would be foolish to ignore these avenues of communication with the boating community. It was agreed that Amy would set up a Twitter account and a FaceBook page for the club, feeds to which would be added to its re-vamped webpage.

4 **MEETINGS AND GATHERINGS**

4.1 **Meetings**

Venues - The Village Hall at Napton-on-the-Hill had already been booked for the Social in November. At the AGM, some members had requested that further meetings be held in venues accessible by public transport. Alison had had a look at Lapworth (see report 6.12.3) and Hampton-in-Arden was also a possibility so it was agreed that Phil, Ros, Iain and Clair would liaise with a view to visiting the two sites to ascertain suitability.

Speakers

- November 2013 Social - Roger Wickson had agreed to give a presentation.
- November 2014 Social - It was agreed that Val & Mike would follow up with Tony Gregory to see if he was willing to give a further talk.
- AGM 2014 - It was agreed that Phil would contact Richard Parry, the new Chief Executive of CRT, to ask him to be our guest speaker.
- Other suggestions for AGM speakers were Sir Neil Cossons (chairman of CRT's Heritage Advisory Group) or CRT's Property Manager.

4.2 **Gatherings**

- Easter 2014 – Jim reported that venues in the London area would be prohibitively expensive and that moorings would be problematic, and he thanked Clair and Iain for their investigations at Duckett's Cut. Other venues suggested were Stoke Bruerne, although that was perhaps already too well visited, and Foxton. It was agreed that Jim would investigate facilities and moorings (liaising with local area manager Jeff Whyatt) at Foxton.
- Club's 50th Anniversary 2016 – although Basingstoke had been ruled out for Easter 2014 because of uncertainties getting on and off the River Wey, it might be a good venue for a summer gathering to celebrate the club's anniversary on the first weekend in August (the old August bank holiday). Bernard had emailed to say that the Byfleet Boat Club were keen for deep draughted boats to visit. Jim would liaise with Bernard.

5 **KEN KEAY SKETCHBOOK**

Sue reported that Tony Lewery had the original artwork and could let the club have it for scanning. It was agreed:

- that Sue would ask Bernard to ask Judith-Ann Cooper for copyright permission.
- to add more information to the book about Ken Keay and the yard. Information and documents to be channelled to Sarah for editing:
 - Rupert to send photo of Ken Keay yard sign.
 - Sarah to ask Bernard for information about the yard.
 - David D to supply photo of Ken Keay presenting the Award.
 - Ros to send list of Award winners.
- to pay for professional scanning of the original artwork and to investigate Perfect Binding:
 - Sue to ascertain size of original artwork, thought to be A3.
 - Val or Mike to check with newsletter printer for scanning and binding options.

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) – letter of thanks to Tony Stammers and receipt of copy of his PowerPoint presentation; positive meeting with Sir Neil Cossons, chair of CRT's Heritage Advisory Group; forthcoming attendance at CRT/IWA conference on 18 May 2013; section 8 procedures re historic boats; new Chief Exec of CRT.
- Phil distributed copies of CRT HAG's Heritage Action Plan 2013-18.
 - Phil would circulate copies of Tony Stammers' PowerPoint presentation to committee members.
- 6.2 **Secretary** (Paul Hunter) – dearth of correspondence; discounts for members; attendance of non-members at club meetings; number of committee meetings and procedures for recording email decisions.
- It was agreed to share newsletters/magazines from other waterways organisations at committee meetings.
 - Paul would send details of discounts already agreed to Val for newsletter and to Ros for website.
 - There had been 15 non-members at the AGM, 7 of whom were partners of members. It was agreed that attendance charges would not be levied, especially in view of the help given at meetings by members' partners. Other non-members could be asked to make a donation towards costs.
 - Hugh Potter had suggested that the club be given a column in Narrow Boat in exchange for waiving our fee for Weaver photos. Phil to discuss with him.
- 6.3 **Treasurer** (Laura Sturrock) – funds in current and savings accounts; bookings of hall for AGM and Social; forms for internet banking.
- Phil, Paul, Val and David D completed the signature blocks for the new internet account, as requested by Laura.
 - David D would check the new account's sort code and account number for inclusion in subscription reminders.

- 6.4 **Membership Secretary** (David Daines) – number of members in various categories; two new members; 8 lapsed memberships; Canal Rivers + Boats also lapsed.
- The slight decrease in membership numbers from March to May 2013 was noted.
 - The committee endorsed David's decision to change the members' boat listings to a strict alphabetical order, regardless of whether boats were historic or modern. This was felt to be a more inclusive approach.
- 6.5 **Archivist** (Richard Booth) – no report
- 6.6 **Newsletter Editor** (Val Roberts) – acceptance of donation towards cost of bumper issue; thinner paper for newsletter not available at current printer; updated Who's Who; franking costs; Ray Shill's use of club's Weaver photos; scanning of Slater photos.
- It was agreed that Val was authorised to produce a bumper edition of the newsletter as and when required to cope with the volume of material she received, without waiting for the committee's specific approval.
 - Updated Who's Who leaflet – it had already been agreed that an updated version would be sent to members after each AGM to show changes to the committee. The latest leaflet would be sent with newsletter 2013/2. It was also agreed that Daniel would send his details to Val for inclusion as a separate newsletter item as it was now too late to include him in the leaflet.
 - Franking machine – it was agreed that Mike and Val would use the service offered by the newsletter printer on a trial basis to see if the savings made were worth any inconvenience, and would report back if there was a problem.
 - Ray Shill had published a book about the Wyrley & Essington Canal that contained photos, credited to the Railway & Canal Historical Society but which were from the club's Weaver collection, negatives of which were held by the club, received from the Industrial Railway Society. Phil to ask him from where he had obtained them.
- 6.7 **Club Shop** (Clair Butler) – lower takings at AGM and Ellesmere Port this year; new book on extant historic boats; new logo on clothing.
- National – Jim and Sarah will take the stand. Val to appeal in newsletter for help in setting up (Thursday) and striking (Sunday). Volunteers must notify Clair so she can obtain entry wristbands for them.
 - Braunston – set up on the Friday.
 - Plaques – Bernard was in the process of organising the melting down of incorrect versions. Shop has supply of original ones – it was agreed to try to sell them as 'vintage' versions before melting.
 - It was agreed that a future agenda item would be to consider the shop stock and come up with fresh ideas.
- 6.8 **Navigation Officer** (Sue Cawson) – provisional winter stoppage programme on CRT website 18 May 2013 for comments.
- Sue appealed for vigilance on changes to lock and other canal furniture and for reports to be sent to her.
 - Sue also asked that dredging issues to be reported to CRT and to her via the incidence report form on the club website. A reminder about the latter to be sent on the Yahoo Groups list.
 - It was agreed that a future newsletter article reminding members how to report issues would be timely.
- 6.9 **Press Officer** (Sarah Hale)
- Sarah had replied to some enquiries about boats received through the website contact form. See also item 3.2 External Communications, above.
- 6.10 **Events** (Jim Cooke) – see 4.2 above for Jim's report on Gatherings
- **Ellesmere Port 2015** - It was agreed that Jim should start to contact personnel at the Boat Museum early in order to be included in the planning process. It was suggested he contact John Inch at the Port, or via Dawn Tigwell.

- **Trophies** – it was agreed that Jim would ask Chris Leah to return the Keay award in December 2013, earlier than usual, in order to refurbish it in time for presentation at the AGM in March 2014.
- **Keay & Hemelryk Award** – Ros confirmed that she had changed the criteria on the forms on the website, and it was agreed to set the closing date for this year's entries to be one week after the November Social.
- **Club Banner** – David D would liaise with David Blagrove to collect it for use at Stoke Bruerne Gala.

6.11 **Website** (Ros Prettyman) – comparative numbers visiting the website in 2011 and 2012; feedback on use and usefulness of the website.

6.12 **External organisations:**

Navigation Advisory Group (Sue Cawson) – next NAG meeting June; next H&S priority is lock ladders.

IWA Liaison (Alison Smedley) – IWA/CRT workshop Birmingham 18 May 2013; Lapworth village hall; IWA Liaison job role; IWA work parties.

- It was agreed that the Liaison role was to act as a conduit between the club and IWA, but did not have any specific duties.
- It was agreed to add the list of IWA working parties to the club's Events calendar.

Partnership Boards (Phil Prettyman, Central Shires)

- Central Shires PB members were booked to attend several gatherings in the area (Etruria, Loughborough, Alrewas, Shackerstone).
- Phil had been tasked with contacting the secondary school in Atherstone with a view to involving school children in a meaningful survey of canal awareness in the town.
- Central Shires was making very strong objections to the impact of HS2 on Fradley, one of the 100 top canal tourist destinations. Sue commented that HS2 was on the agenda for the June meeting of the Navigation Advisory Group. Rupert asked what the 100 top destinations were – Phil to enquire.
- Another area of impact was the proposed Curzon Street terminus in Birmingham, which might include putting the canal through a 70m long tunnel.

CRT Museums and Attractions Group – Norman reported that he had heard that the group appeared to have been slow to get going. A project was "Birmingham to the Sea". Restoration of some boats (eg Oak) at Gloucester may be possible. Historic tall ships expected at Gloucester for late May bank holiday weekend.

Young Waterways and Boating Society - As far as was known, the launch of the Society was planned for the Crick Boat Show over the late May bank holiday weekend, but there had been no news of late.

6.13 **Area Reps**

Central Shires (Rupert Smedley) – User Group notes; Atherstone Stop & Shop project; visitor moorings survey.

- Rupert added that CRT was considering adding mini-paddles at Bedford Street staircase locks, Caldon Canal, in order to relieve water pressure before the main paddles were drawn.

East Midlands (Mike Harrison) Mike had not been able to attend recent User Group meetings.

- Cromwell lock, River Trent – floods last year had left a sandbar that was blocking navigation and a stoppage had been announced. The committee wondered why it had not been cleared during the winter rather than during the 'cruising season'. Sue would raise this at the next NAG meeting in June.
- The Birdswood, now tied at Langley Mill, was to go to Cromford Wharf as a trip boat. Its previous diesel/hydraulic drive had to be converted to electric/hydraulic to meet environmental noise requirements.
- Anniversary rally at Langley Mill would take place over the bank holiday weekend at the end of May.

East (Amy-Alys Tillson) – River Nene flooding; Salters Lode/Denver Sluice dredging; River Cam licensing.

- Gold licence holders – Cam Conservators had asked for £1,000 from CRT as contribution to allow Gold licence holders to access the Cam free of charge. Amy would raise this with Beryl McDowall (NAG Licensing group) to obtain further information. Sue to forward Beryl's email address.

Kennet & Avon (Tom Judd) - no report

London (Sandra Greene) – Sandra forwarded the minutes of the User Group meeting where topics raised were: SE mooring consultation; dredging on Slough Arm; complaint from Islington resident about smoke from boat chimneys; number of Enforcement Officers checking unlicensed craft; overhanging vegetation on River Stort; litter problems; biodiversity issues on Regent’s Canal towpath; shortage of recycling facilities. Presentations were given on the local Waterways Partnership, engineering update, mooring/boating update.

Manchester & Pennine (George Boyle) – M&P Partnership Board manifesto launch; Macclesfield swing bridge 46 locked out of use; navigation problems at Railway Bridge No 1, Peak Forest; Bollington winding hole problem continues.

- Brian McGuiggan’s complaints about low levels on Macclesfield had received strong support from audience at User Group meeting.
- Macclesfield Canal Society was organising a work party at Bridge 21 to grapple out underwater blockages.
- Winding holes – a local decision appeared to have been taken to lease Bollington to private boaters, thus depriving boaters of a suitable winding hole. It was noted that winding holes were listed in the old Blue Book guides, and in early Nicholson’s which had been published in conjunction with British Waterways. It was agreed:
 - to pursue a national campaign on this issue, but to start with emphasis on the Macclesfield
 - to send any evidence/data of their previously established positions to George
 - to collect photographs of good/poor winding holes – Alvecote, Bollington, Stretton etc

North East (David Lowe) – no issues to report.

North Wales & Borders (Iain MacTavish) – User Group notes: Local Partnership Board annual meeting September 2013; Sutton Weaver Bridge repairs; maintenance update; stoppages 2013/14; T&M breach; volunteering; use of CCTV for site inspections; Jim Taylor’s successor.

- Sue had circulated an email about the problems of access to the River Dee, Iain commented that silting in the second lock was the problem.

North West (Daniel Mawdsley)

- Daniel was willing to act as Area Rep and was formally co-opted to the committee until AGM 2014. Phil thanked him for volunteering and Paul would contact CRT to nominate him as our area rep.
- Daniel had already attended User Group meetings in another role; one of the main topics raised had been continuous cruisers. The person appointed to oversee heritage buildings in the area had come from a National Trust background.

South East & Thames (Bernard Hales)

- It was noted, and agreed, that Bernard might not be able to attend committee meetings, but that he was happy to continue to send reports.
- Paul would check that SE&T had Bernard’s contact details as our area rep.

South Wales & Severn (Norman Mitchell) – no user group meetings and none scheduled.

West Midlands (Rebekah Fuller) – User Group meeting; list of work undertaken in 2012/13; future work planned; HS2’s affect on Minworth 5&6, Saltley viaduct, Ashted bottom lock; volunteering hours; water resources; annualised hours; vacating Broad St basin and relocating to Minerva Wharf.

- Committee interested to know whether bridge repairs included Br 58 on Stratford.

7 **MATTERS ARISING** - the Action List from 2 March 2013 was updated.

8 **DATES AND PLACES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Saturday 3 August 2013	11.00am	Hazell Road, Farnham
Saturday 5 October 2013	11.00am	Hazelhurst Cottage, Denford, Leek
Saturday 30 November 2013	11.00am	short meeting at Napton, prior to Social

The meeting closed at 4.50pm

Phil Prettyman
Chairman