

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on 2nd October, 1993 at the Port 86, All Saints Street, Hockley, Birmingham, commencing at 10 a.m.

Present: Penny Barber, Melanie Darlington, Jon Darlington, Roger Hancock, Neil Hutchinson, Peter Lea, Stephen Peters, Peter Sterry, Nikki Timbrell, Harry Winter.

1. Apologies: Phil Bland, Dave Green, Christine Potter, Stephen Peters from lunch-time.
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 14th August, 1993
 - 2.1 Item 6.3: 4th sentence amended to read "Some people agreed this to be a good idea."
 3. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by this agenda
 - 3.1 Item 3.3: Students to do research into boat safety justification. Jon Darlington still to follow this up. It may be better to wait until the autumn term has started. Penny Barber to make enquiries at Aston University. JD/PB
 - 3.2 Item 8.1: Parliamentary Waterways Group. NABO has joined this group, and the subscription is valid until the start of the Parliamentary session in 1994. There is a meeting where the topic "Are rivers for boats?" will be discussed. The RYA are described in the invitation to this meeting as the 'national umbrella organisation for cruising boat owners'. They have shown little interest in inland waterways in the past, but are trying to show more now. Neil Hutchinson pointed out that NABO are sometimes thought to be part of the IWA/RYA co-operative. Peter Lea to attend PWG meeting at 6.30 p.m. on 19th October. PL
 - 3.3 Item 14.1: Consultation on stoppages. Penny Barber had enquired of Stuart Sims why NABO had not been invited to meetings to discuss stoppages in the Midlands. Mr Sims says there has not been a meeting since March. Penny to ask about the Stourbridge meeting on 15th July. PB
 - 3.4 Item 5.1.2: Nikki Timbrell has written a letter of thanks to Pat Buckle.
 - 3.5 Item 5.1.4: Standing orders. Penny Barber has spoken to Girobank; we can probably set up standing orders, but the details need to be settled.

A five-year membership has been suggested to Dave Green, at 5 times the current rate. It was agreed that as we do not know in what form NABO will exist in 5 years time, nor how stable the membership will be, and as interest rates are low, we should not pursue this.

It was agreed that standing orders would be a better way to keep members. Peter Lea pointed out that the Midland Bank offer free banking to clubs having less than 25 debits per quarter. We could organise the standing orders through the Midland if Girobank are not helpful.
 - 3.6 Item 6.2: Peter Lea has asked Sue Cawson for design help, but she has no time. Penny Barber may have access to graphic design and DTP.
 - 3.7 Item 6.6: Waterways World. Dave Green has been unable to speak to Hugh Potter.

3.7cont *inf* The Waterways World article about the BW Bill gave credit to everyone except NABO. Penny Barber asked John McCormack of RBOA *he was prepared* to write to WW pointing out the extent of NABO's involvement. The RBOA are quite embarrassed, and said they would write. Penny Barber to find out whether they did. PB

3.8 Item 5.5.9: BW keys. Peter Lea to write to BW concerning the advertising of BW keys for the GU walk passport. Jon Darlington keen that the issue is chased up. PL

3.9 Item 5.5.2: Harry Winter reported that he had written to A P Boat Services.

4. Treasurer's report

4.1 Penny Barber reported that the accounts for the year ended 31/3/93 have been audited. Jon Darlington had checked that we could use our usual auditor, and the Institute of Chartered Accountants agreed, provided that NABO's constitution allowed it, and the auditor was not paid more than £50 in fees. Instead, NABO paid travelling expenses from Chesterfield.

4.2 The audited accounts have notes added as discussed at the last meeting. It was agreed that we should circulate the accounts in the next Boater, before the AGM, as well as in the Year Book.

4.3 Penny Barber wished to prepare a set of half-year accounts, and a stock check is needed for this. It was pointed out that travelling expenses can be claimed. Peter Sterry has most of the membership leaflets, which he will bring to the next meeting. ALL PS

4.4 Penny Barber has ordered 50 NABO pennants, which will cost NABO £4.50 each, plus VAT and postage and packing to send them. They will be sold at £8 each. Neil Hutchinson suggested that we should have them available at the AGM for the first time, and should advertise them as such.

4.5 Bank balance as at 30/9/93 was £7650. Note that the concentration of renewals at this time of year means a large reserve of advance subscriptions.

Income in half year: £6065, from New members £1959, Renewals £2064, Donations £439, Stickers £230, Sweatshirts £845 (£135 profit), Family membership £528.

Expenditure in half year: £4221, from Boater and newsletter printing £334, Postage of same £748, Other postage £218, Travel £157, Stationery, phone etc £365, Room hire £60, Rickmansworth £81, Peterborough £118, Stand material £70, BMIF show £35, Letterheads £80, New membership leaflet £294, Computer case £61, Stickers £221, All parties W/ways Group £150, Insurance £202, Audit £53, Sweatshirts £710, Pennants £264.

4.6 The insurance (£202) covers public liability and stock.

5. Reports from Council members

5.1 Membership

5.1.1 Melanie Darlington reported in Christine Potter's absence. Christine and Melanie have spent some time with the computer bringing the records up to date. There are now approximately 1147 members, including new ones from Peterborough. 19 new members have joined in September, and 143 have been lost between August 1992 and May 1993. However, all these members are still recorded on the computer in case of reinstatement.

- 5.1.2 The wastage is quite high, but we hope that standing orders will improve this. Inevitably, some members will not be happy, and will not rejoin. Dave Green had recently had a letter from a member who accused us of not telling the truth about the BW Bill, and complaining that the article about higher paid BW employees in the last newsletter was distasteful.
- 5.1.3 Neil Hutchinson has handed out about 250 leaflets, of which only 5 were refused, 3 of those being vehement opponents of NABO. He has met some lapsed NABO members, who think NABO is OK, but have not sent their money. Peter Lea pointed out that we could be doing more to get our message across, even if leaflets are well received.
- 5.1.4 It was suggested that we could ask BW for a list of all licence holders, or even ask them to put NABO leaflets in with Licence renewals. However, it was agreed that we would not want to be associated with BW in this way, like the IWA. Peter Sterry should look at practical ways of getting leaflets to more people, and we should discuss this at the next meeting. PS
- 5.1.5 Questionnaire
- We have had about 450 replies. Melanie Darlington has analysed the ticked box answers, and Nikki Timbrell the written answers. Some issues of membership raised by the questionnaire were discussed. Associate membership has been suggested, for those without their own boats. The Council can sanction members outside of the rules (boat owners on inland waterways), but do we ever check up? Should we admit hire boaters, many of them experienced boaters? Or those with shared ownership boats? It was agreed that we should put a resolution to the AGM for a change in the Constitution. Peter Lea to draft this. PL
- Many other issues of policy etc are raised by the questionnaire, and it was agreed that these should be discussed in detail at the next meeting. Meanwhile Nikki Timbrell to write an article for the Boater. NT
- 5.2 The Boater
- 5.2.1 A Boater is to follow this meeting. Jon and Melanie Darlington have a new printer, which cost £254 inc VAT, with an additional £31 for switches and cables. This should improve the quality of the print.
- 5.2.2 Melanie Darlington has had three quotes from printers for printing, collating, stapling, as the job is now too large to done in house. The quotes were £695, £282 and £200 for 1100 24-page magazines with a blue cover. £200 is only 50% more than the present cost. It was agreed that we should try the printer. The duplicator will still be available for stop-press items.
- 5.3 Newsletter. No discussion.
- 5.4 Publicity and public relations
- 5.4.1 Peter Sterry gave a talk at Ellesmere Port. It was a good meeting, and resulted in 3 new members.
- 5.4.2 Dave Green has had a letter from Harry Arnold, editor of IWA Waterways and writer of articles elsewhere, to say that he had never had anything from us. Peter Sterry to contact him. PS
- 5.4.3 A Canal & Riverboat article is coming out this month. The subject matter for the next article to be discussed at the next meeting. Penny Barber suggested the moorings issue.

5.5 Regional representation

- 5.5.1 Harry Winter attended a meeting with the Port of London Authority on 29th September, a meeting of the River User Committee. Harry to write a report for the Boater. HW
- 5.5.2 Harry Winter has had some correspondence with a Naval Architect with a boat on the Broads, who had attended a meeting concerned with the introduction of boat standards on the Broads. Unfortunately, he is not interested in acting as a NABO representative for the Broads. However, Nikki Timbrell has received a nomination for Council from a member who is moving his boat to the Broads and is willing to fill this gap.
- 5.5.3 Another Council nominee is a friend of Harry Winter, and lives near Leicester. He may be interested in helping with the organisation of a rally at Market Harborough if it goes ahead, as he has experience of rally organisation.
- 5.5.4 Peter Lea attended a User meeting at GU (South), at which waterway standards were discussed at length. GU (S) has 175 boats on its Houseboat Moratorium list, and has plans to find temporary moorings for all these by the end of this year. Permanent moorings will be found later. Cycling policy, grass cutting, and dog fouling were also discussed. A local policeman is promoting a boat Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the area. Nikki Timbrell pointed out that some of the respondents to the questionnaire were concerned about vandalism, and suggested that NABO should publicise the scheme. Caroline Clark (manager, GU (S)) has issued postcards to be returned to her in case of complaint.
- 5.5.5 Neil Hutchinson has been sent a letter from Sue Burleigh of GU (S) to a Mr Barker, stating that he has been moored at Fenny Stratford on two occasions, and as he has no permanent mooring he cannot stay there for more than 14 days, nor can he return there. Neil suggests we take this up with Jim Kelly. It appears that there is someone at Fenny Stratford in the habit of complaining to BW about boats in the area.
- 5.5.6 Penny Barber reported on progress at Hockley Port. Boats are now going to be able to stay there during the redevelopment, providing they are prepared to put up with the noise. They will not be charged while the work is going on. Alternatively, they can go to Sherborne Street, and BW will reimburse them for the difference between the mooring rate at Sherborne Street and Hockley Port. After development is complete, they will require a Houseboat Certificate, but will be charged the same as a Pleasure Boat Licence for the first year. A surveyor must visit them within a month of their return to agree a timescale for obtaining a BSC. Existing moorers will pay the Class 3 rate for mooring in the first year, then Class 4, and Class 5 (of 9) in the third year. It appears that BW are showing a reasonable approach, and that consultation works. Penny Barber to write a positive piece for the Boater. PB
- Janice Christiansen, who is still petitioning against the BW Bill, is campaigning for Hockley Port. BW are trying to get her to withdraw, and they would not want this episode to get to the Select Committee.
- 5.5.7 Penny Barber is still following up Mr Russell's case concerning being charged for mooring at Great Haywood. Penny thought it was in Roger Herrington's area, but received an answer to her letter from Worcester. Penny to continue correspondence. PB
- 5.5.8 Penny Barber was approached at Peterborough by a member who would like NABO to write to the Brayford Trust in Lincoln to complain about increased charges. They are too scared to write themselves. It was agreed that it was difficult to write effectively without using the member's name, but that we could write in general terms. The charges may be passed on from BW increases.

- 5.5.9 Penny Barber has had a letter from a member in Wakefield complaining that the local lock opening times are not as published by BW. There is also a sanitary station at Ramdens Bridge which is locked with a key other than BW key, after BW said that the sanitary station would be available. Peter Sterry to write to BW about the key and the lock times. PS

6. Peterborough Rally and events in 1994

- 6.1 Peter Lea had visited the IWA stand at Peterborough and found a series of statements displayed which he considered to be inaccurate: "Only the IWA.... represents boat owners, has regular meetings, backs opposition to the end-of-garden moorings issue, opposed the Transport and Works Bill." These were discussed vigorously with the IWA. Later an IWA representative visited the NABO stand; he would like the IWA to work with NABO, and offered to suggest co-operation to the IWA executive. The meeting did not know if Dave Green has taken this any further.

The IWA are trying to form a Waterways Forum, but NABO has not been invited to join. It was agreed that we should try to arrange a meeting for discussion. However, David Stevenson had wanted a meeting before last Christmas, but nothing came of this.

Jon Darlington to write to David Stevenson to point out the inaccuracy of the published statements, and that it is unfair to NABO and others. JD

- 6.2 It was agreed that we should go to the IWA rally at Waltham Abbey next year, for which advance information is already available. Peter Sterry to check with Christine Potter who may have more information. PS

7. 1993 NABO AGM

- 7.1 16th October is the deadline for nominations and resolutions. Proposers and seconders were arranged for new nominees, and nominations completed for existing Council members willing to stand for re-election.

8. River Wey and Godalming Navigations

- 8.1 Mr de la Haye has been invited to report to the Council, and will be attending the meeting on 6th November.

9. Broads representation

- 9.1 We have a letter from the Broads Authority inviting comments on the Broads plan. Stephen Peters to look at this large document. We should have a Broads representative after the AGM.

12. BW Annual Report

- 12.1 It appears from the BW published accounts that BW loans to associated companies have been written off within a year; these total more than £2 million. A friend of Jon Darlington has written to the Independent newspaper about this, and they are investigating.
- 12.2 Stephen Peters questioned the item concerning the Inland Revenue in the recent issue of Waterways News. It appears that some people have been buying and selling boats without declaring the income, or keeping their ownership of

12.2cont... a boat quiet, which is why the Inland Revenue have asked BW for a list of Licence holders. It is good that BW have published this information.

10. Boat rally in Market Harborough

10.1 Harry Winter has tried to contact the relevant person at Market Harborough council, but he is on holiday. Chris Barnacle, who is standing for the Council, has experience of organising rallies, as he was involved with the IWA event at Hawkesbury. He and Dave Green are willing to help organise an event. Peter Lea warned of the time taken to organise an event, and that we do not want it to be a failure. Thus 1995 seems more likely than 1994.

11. BW Customer Charter and NABO Boaters Charter

11.1 A draft NABO Boaters Charter had been circulated for consideration. Peter Lea suggested that we should include a clause to say that the backlog of maintenance should be completed by a certain date. It was thought that BW use this backlog to gain funding from the Government, so this would not be a good idea.

11.2 Peter Lea also thought that the stated stoppage period should be decreased; i.e. November to March was too long. Neil Hutchinson was concerned about the Right of Navigation - if this is proved, then stoppages would have to be reduced. The Right of Navigation issue should be discussed at a future meeting. The suggestion that BW's ultimate aim was to have waterways navigable 365 days a year was rejected as impractical. Roger Hancock suggested that the stoppage period should initially be November to March, and that the Charter should state that BW will work towards reducing this period.

11.3 The commitment of BW to upgrading remainder waterways to cruiseway status was discussed. It appears that funding from local authorities would be lost if this happened.

11.4 We should suggest an implementation date for the Charter.

11.5 Neil Hutchinson thought that the dredging conditions were not sufficient. It was suggested that the last paragraph of this section should be amended to read "The local waterway standards will contain details...." It was also suggested that point 1 should be amended to begin "Where the original construction of the waterway permits, we plan to dredge...."

11.6 Penny Barber considered that facilities are not 'free of charge' as they are paid for in a licence fee. However, it was agreed that this implied no extra charge.

11.7 We now have to sell the idea to BW. Canal & Riverboat will no doubt publish notice of this at the appropriate time. Penny Barber asked if she could give a copy to Janice Christiansen, but as the document has not been seen by BW yet, and is subject to change, it was agreed that nobody else should see it.

11.8 Peter Lea reported on correspondence he had had with Caroline Clark (GU (S)) concerning inspection and copies of the local waterway standards. Peter asked for a copy, but Caroline Clark pointed out that it would be expensive, and require frequent updates. Peter Lea indicated that NABO would be prepared to pay. After referring to Jim Kelly and Peter Quoine, Caroline Clark offered to lend a copy of the standards for consultation, provided that no copy was made. BW do not want every boat owner to have a copy so that they can complain about every breach of the standards. Council thought that it had already been

11.8cont... agreed that user groups could have a copy of the standards in exchange for a subscription.

Jon Darlington pointed out that the standards have to be published, and that the original Government intention was that users could see and measure standards against performance. Whether extracts of Caroline Clark's letter should be published in the Boater was discussed - Jon Darlington to decide. JD

11.9 Nikki Timbrell commented that from her brief look at the waterway standards, there was plenty about grass cutting and hedge laying, but nothing about the maintenance of paddle gear, lock gates etc.

11.10 Nikki Timbrell mentioned the BW categorisation of waterways according to use (1: over 10,000 boat movements per year, 2: 1,000 - 10,000 boat movements, and 3: less than 1,000 boat movements) and 'environs' (A: high profile, B: the majority, and C: low use, rural areas). It appears that NABO was unaware of this new classification. The standards set for facilities, towpaths etc depend on the classification.

11.11 Pump-out facilities are a concern of members, noted on the questionnaires. The waterway standards state that for A-type waterways, coin or card-operated pump-out facilities will be available 7 days a week, and that for B and C-type there will be facilities to discharge self-operated pump-out direct into hopper or manhole. Nikki Timbrell to write up for Boater. NT

11.12 Stephen Peters has proposed that if BW are to have a charter, NABO should have one too. He has drafted a 10-point document. The Council questioned whether a charter was needed, but considered that it could be adopted as a policy document. Penny Barber proposed that we discuss it at the next meeting, and meanwhile send comments and amendments to Stephen Peters. ALL

13. Meeting with Jim Kelly

13.1 Jon Darlington has been trying to arrange a meeting with Jim Kelly, Peter Quoine (re houseboats) and Ken Dodd (Jim Kelly's boss), but it appears to be impossible to find a date when all three are available. Jon Darlington and Peter Lea to attend, with Penny Barber for discussion on houseboats. Jon to chase up again, but may have to arrange separate meetings. JD

13.2 Items for discussion: Handrails in tunnels, BW keys (issue to public), consultation procedure, undesirable boat dwellers, pump-out facilities, Customer Charter, NABO Boaters Charter, availability of waterway standards, mooring classification, waterways classification (1,2,3,A,B,C). *Water transfer.*

14. London Underground development

14.1 An extension to the East London line will affect the Regents canal, as a derelict bridge over the canal will need to be refurbished. Harry Winter to follow this up. HW

15. Discussion with the DoE

15.1 It has been suggested to NABO that we would get further with the DoE by cultivating relations with Nigel Dawling, a senior civil servant at the DoE, rather than continuing to write letters to the minister, Lord Strathclyde. It has been suggested that we seek a meeting. This suggestion came from Ray Wood

- 15.1cont... of the DoE who is trying to promote the waterways, and who approached NABO at Peterborough.
- 15.2 It was agreed that we should seek a formal meeting, attended by the Chairman and someone else, and that we should research and suggest some topics for discussion beforehand. The main purpose of the meeting will be to create a good impression.
- 15.3 Suggested topics were reciprocal licencing, harmonised boat standards, water transfer (effect on boaters), and a right of navigation. Neil Hutchinson to produce a list of all the inland waterway authorities in the country. Roger Hancock to look into the legal side of the right of navigation, and the up-grading of remainder waterways into cruiseways, and water transfer. NH
RH
16. Any other business
- 16.1 Penny Barber's new telephone number is 021-359-6531, extn 4033, daytimes, early morning and between 5.30 and 6 p.m. best.
- 16.2 Penny Barber reported that the RBOA have been asked to write for Canal & River-boat every other month.
- 16.3 Penny Barber reported that the end-of-garden moorings judgement is to be challenged by the residents of Hampton Hall Farm in Rickmansworth. All the boaters have put £5 into a new association, and someone has legal aid to fight the case. Harry Winter received a request for 30 NABO application forms from someone on this site - it is possible that NABO may be asked to support the fight.
- 16.4 Janice Christian_{sen} has asked NABO for support - she is petitioning against the BW Bill. Level 3 fines (up to £1000) have been decided on for contravention of the provisions of the BW Bill. Dave Green has replied that we cannot do anything as an organisation, in case we jeopardise the concessions already achieved.
- 16.5 The Hull Bridge Boating Club have asked NABO for support in an appeal to the local county council to build a swing or lift bridge over the River Hull following the failed plans to build a tunnel. The Club want to ensure unrestricted navigation. Dave Green has written to the council in support.
- 16.6 Jon Darlington has had a reply to his letter requesting information from the Association of Private Moorees, concerning the outstanding costs for the end-of-garden moorings case. Jon Darlington suggested that we should make a contribution, particularly as we have been accused by the IWA of not putting any money behind the defence of this issue. Peter Lea proposed that up to £50 should be offered. Harry Winter opposed this idea, but it ^{was} carried on a vote. Jon Darlington to phone first to check how much the Association is short. JD
- 16.7 The member at Seabrook with a NABO notice in his garden stipulates that his moorers must be NABO members. He has asked for membership information in case they have not renewed. It was agreed that this could not be supplied, and that we should write a polite letter referring to the Data Protection Act.
- 16.8 There is a BW (S) regional meeting on 1st December, 6.30 p.m. Harry Winter to go. HW
17. Date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Saturday 6th November, 1993, starting at 10 a.m. at The Port 86, All Saints Street, Hockley, Birmingham.