

**HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB**  
**Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 11.00 am on Sunday 1 October 2017**  
**at The Samuel Barlow, Alvecote, Tamworth B78 1AS**

**PRESENT:** Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Richard Booth, Clair Butler, Sue Cawson, David Daines, Nick Grundy, Mike Harrison, Paul Hunter (until 2pm), Iain MacTavish, Norman Mitchell, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Penny Ross, Rupert Smedley, Laura Sturrock.

Phil warmly welcomed Penny, the club's new Membership Secretary, to the first meeting since her co-option.

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Sarah Edgson, Bernard Hales, Ian McCarthy, Sarah Levick, David Lowe, Daniel Mawdsley, Michael Pinnock, Alison Smedley, Amy-Alys Tillson, James Tidy.

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2017 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 **SOCIAL, 25 NOVEMBER 2017 AT LAPWORTH**

- **Speaker** - Sue reported that she had been in touch with Alan Jones who had requested timings. It was agreed she would suggest a 2.15pm start after "parish notices" at 2.00, with two sessions 2.15-3.00 and 4.00-5.00 with a refreshments/social break 3.00-4.00. Sue would also ask about IT requirements.
- **Raffle** – see report under Shop
- **Name labels** – Mike would bring blank sticky labels for attendees to write their own names on.
- **Refreshments** – Ros: tea & coffee; Sue: milk & cake; Clair: evening meal at the Navigation.

4 **AGM 3 MARCH 2018**

- **Constitution, proposed changes to Rule 5 Finance and Rule 7 Dissolution** – Laura and Paul would prepare draft wording for motions to permit the committee to give donations to waterways good causes (Rule 5) and to bring the club's rules into line with HMRC requirements (Rule 7). The motions would need to go out with Newsletter 2017/4 in order to give members the required notice. Press date was 17 November 2017.
- **Committee elections** – Paul would email a list of committee posts due for re-election at the AGM, asking if present incumbents were willing to stand again. The final list would need to go out with Newsletter 2017/4.
- **Name labels** - Penny would liaise with Steve Wood to produce pre-printed labels as a vote might be necessary.
- **AGM speaker** – Sue had contacted Tony Lewery who had confirmed he would be willing to give a talk. Formal confirmation was needed, Phil to email Tony.

5 **GATHERINGS 2018 and 2019**

- **2018 Easter (early April), Boat Museum, Ellesmere Port** – Sue had attended 2 meetings about the gathering: the Museum was keen to have as many historic boats as possible but for publicity purposes, with local dignitaries, would prefer a more structured convoy from Tower Wharf Chester to the Port; there would be 2 horse-drawn boats in the convoy; the top basin should be cleared by next Easter and she hoped the Museum would be keen to have it filled with historic boats; the ship lock was not yet open; the programme of events might include a visit to the storage facility to view the Museum's lifted boats; there would be an auction run by SUFBC (Saturn) on the Saturday. Phil suggested an attraction would be the loading and unloading of an historic boat, Sue commented that this could probably be done in one of the narrow locks. Sue would continue to liaise about the gathering and Ros would contact Mike Turpin to enquire about entry forms.
- **2018 Spring Bank Holiday (late May), ECPDA, Langley Mill** - free entry for historic boats was available at the rally to celebrate ECPDA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Ros had added details to the club's on-line calendar. The club Shop would need a space approximately 4x3m, Mike would liaise with the organisers to book the Shop in.
- **2019 Spring Bank Holiday (late May), HNBC, Hebden Bridge** – it was agreed that the club would organise a campaigning gathering at Hebden Bridge, along similar lines to its 2017 gathering at Woking with boats' transit times booked for the locks, requiring close collaboration with CRT's local waterways manager to maximise water supply. Nick commented that the Bridgewater's 28 day limit might cause problems. Paul would contact Paul Monahan (the gathering's original proposer) and invite him to be part of the club's working party of Phil, Laura (costs), Ian McC, Mike and Ros (paperwork).
- **Bugsworth** – Rupert reported there would be a forthcoming anniversary.
- **2019 Late May, Welford Arm** – Ros reported a 50th anniversary gathering to celebrate the re-opening of the Welford Arm.

## 6 BOAT INSURANCE

- **Towergate Mardon** – although previously a recommended specialist for historic boats, it had become less helpful with the departure of Mike Stimpson.
- **Look/Canopus, A-plan** – insurance companies requiring Mike Stimpson to be an ex officio committee member in order for club members to receive a discount on premiums.
- **GJW Direct** - an insurance company wanting to set up an exclusivity deal with the club (publicity and promotion) in exchange for discounts on premiums.
- Richard reported that he had received a good quote via Look/Canopus/A-Plan and thought that the requirement for a survey once every 10 years was very reasonable. Amy had emailed to recommend Look/Canopus, as had David L. Ros thought it was unwise for the club to enter any exclusivity deal with a particular insurer because of the danger of the club being held to blame in any future dispute between members and the insurance companies. Paul suggested contacting the insurers again to express our disquiet at their proposed restrictions, and also asking members at the forthcoming Social if they had any recommendations.

## 7 CLUB REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS

- Phil explained the difficulty he had in attending some 10.00am-start meetings in the midlands and raised again his suggestion that the club should have a Vice-Chairman as well to share the networking and the knowledge gained at meetings. He was slightly worried that, having been elected as a boaters' rep to CRT Council, he might be seen as less independent. Sue suggested that meetings that Phil was unable to attend should be delegated to the appropriate Area Rep. David D commented that the club was lucky to have so many dedicated volunteers to serve on committees when compared with some other canal societies who struggled to find members. Ros to add this as an agenda item for the January 2018 meeting.

## 8 WRITTEN REPORTS had been submitted from the following committee members, and are contained in the Appendix to these Minutes. These reports were taken as read.

8.1 **Chairman** (Phil Prettyman) – CRT Trustee appointments; CRT Boater Reps' meetings; Sue attended licence review meeting; Sight Seen partnership meeting; Hemelryk Award presented at Alvecote gathering.

- It was important to try to get the new CRT Trustees onto our boats to see the canals from a boater's perspective. To this end, they should receive a copy of the Newsletter, be invited to attend the Social and/or the AGM, followed up by invitations to go boating.
- Part of the CRT Council meeting had focused on the "Well Being" aspect of canals, which addressed issues of obesity, fitness, deprivation and stress, all of which were on the government's agenda and for which local authorities had funds. In addition, if CRT could demonstrate "Well Being" involvement it would hit targets necessary for the next grant renewal process.

8.2 **Secretary** (Paul Hunter) – nothing to report

8.3 **Treasurer** (Laura Sturrock) – bank balances.

- Laura had received a certificate from Lichfield & Hatherton which she would pass on to Val for the Newsletter.

8.4 **Membership Secretary** - list of new members

- Mike complimented Penny on the thorough and conscientious start she had made on the MemSec role.
- Most of the lapsed members from December and June had re-joined following prompting from Penny.
- Val asked that an updated list of non-payers be circulated to the committee so that they could be followed up in person at other meetings and gatherings.

8.5 **Archivist** (Richard Booth) – verbal report at meeting

- The requested article for the Newsletter was nearing completion and would be sent to Val soon.
- More and more photographs of old boats were appearing, mostly cut down day-boats.
- Rupert reported that Steve Wood had been given a 1890s book of coal boat records. Richard would contact him to find out about sharing/scanning it.
- Iain would investigate the purchase of a hand-held scanner for use both by the Shop and by the Archivist. Richard already had a Brother A3 scanner.
- Sue would obtain photographs of Winsford on the Leeds & Liverpool canal and send to Richard.

- 8.6 **Newsletter Editor** (Val Roberts) – press date 17 November; Friends of Cromford; newsletter comps list requires updating; Kevin Rush membership for Key Award; letter from Bryan Nichol; collection of slides from John Cooke; printing prices for membership leaflet; alternative leaflet designs; spare storage disc to be purchased; transcription of Ike Argent interview; query advertisement payments received; copy Newsletter sent to engineering firm in Walsall.
- Friends of Cromford, subscription issue resolved.
  - List of complimentary copies of the newsletter needs updating, including name of new CRT Trustees. Penny would extract a list from the Database and circulate it to the committee for update.
  - Free membership of the club was awarded to Narrow Boat Heritage Foundation as their boat Dane had won the Key award, but the Foundation's address was needed. Sue to check (see also October 2017, 8.6)
  - Brian Nichol wanted to donate many of his boating items to the club Archive. Val would forward his email to Phil for response.
  - Membership leaflet. The Walsall photo was chosen. Val would arrange printing.
  - A volunteer was needed to transcribe, from MP3 to text, the recording of a reminiscence by Ike Argent.
  - Val would contact Amy (now Marketing at Bollington Wharf) to find out about Brian McGuigan's advertisement.
- 8.7 **Club Shop** (Clair Butler) – sales at Audlem, Whitchurch, Maesbury; on-line sales; Weaver book stock now 59; new Di Murrell book; new stock Christmas card designs needed; donated items for tombola or raffle; clothing suppliers needed; disposal of remaining Woking plaques; replacement of display boards.
- Christmas cards – Bridget Carter had agreed to produce a design (portrait) for 2018.
  - On-line shop - Laura would manage it when Clair was on holiday.
  - Donated items – it was agreed to split the items over the next 2 meetings (Social & AGM) and to offer them as prizes in a tombola or a raffle.
  - Clothing – Richard knew of a clothing company that would send embroidered items direct to customers.
  - Woking plaques – it was agreed to trade in the 2 remaining plaques against the next club order for brassware.
  - Display boards – it was agreed that Clair & Iain would research the most appropriate boards and inform the committee which ones should be purchased.
  - AGM – it would not be possible to have the Shop at the AGM as Clair & Iain would be on holiday.
- 8.8 **Navigation** (Sue Cawson) – effectiveness of NAG & dredging sub group; vegetation sub group set up; winter stoppages meeting; survey work at Hurleston started; water shortages on K&A and Leicester line exacerbated by poor boating skills; wide boats on narrow waterways; Inland Waterways Heritage meeting and Licensing Consultation meeting attended.
- Locks - Although winter stoppage works on Hurleston lock were scheduled, it would be difficult as the surrounding land was sandy and the reservoir belonged to United Utilities, not CRT. (See also 8.13 North Wales & Borders report below). Marple locks were closed for 6 months to investigate reducing width to less than 6'10". Napton locks also an issue.
  - Winter stoppages programmes were being set up earlier, it was hoped eventually to achieve a 3-year plan.
  - Heritage meeting at BCLM had been organised by Margaret Harrison, from Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port, to share information about licensing and maintenance. Sue felt the club was seen as an important influence as its members ran well maintained historic craft. The next meeting would focus on education and how different organisations tackled it.
  - Licensing Consultation meeting – phase 3 consultation was to start soon, focusing on individual licence holders' views. There had been talk about definition of a butty, perhaps a modern trailer boat would count! Also discussions about wide beam boats, especially their incursions onto narrow canals where vegetation clearance and channel dredging was only suitable to permit 2 narrow boats to pass. Mike queried whether the spread of wide beams was a topic on which the club should be involved, but it was felt in general that as it affected navigation and possibly historic infrastructure, it was a legitimate cause of navigation concern for the club. Phil suggested the club's campaign focus should be on the suitability of certain craft for particular canals.
- 8.9 **Press & Social Media** (Amy-Alys Tillson) – no report
- 8.10 **Website** (Ros Prettyman) – updated Shop stock; layout of Shop pages; details of 28 messages/queries received via website's Contact form; regular jobs list; planned work over the winter months.
- 8.11 **Awards** (James Tidy) – no report
- Mini plaques for Award winners - Clair to contact James to discuss.
  - Closing date for nominations – Ros to put a notice on the website home page banner and on club's Facebook.

8.12 **External organisations** – (Alison Smedley, IWA rep) EA sale of Ely moorings; Goole locks, successful objection; IWA logo change.

- Rupert commented on the uncertainty faced by local boatyard if the land at Ely was sold off. He believed it was triggered by an edict from Government to QUANGOs. Phil to discuss further with Sarah L.

### 8.13 **Area Reps**

**East** (Sarah Levick) – transfer from EA to CRT; anti-EA PR effort re Project Hereward; Islip footbridge open; Alwalton shoal work postponed; Anglian Waterways volunteer scheme website; success of Friends of R Nene moorings; website for east navigation works.

**East Midlands** (Mike Harrison) – Boston Grand Sluice lock keepers scheme; GU Leicester water shortages; Diwali celebrations closure; Hindu funerals at Barrow on Soar; user group forum in October.

- Mike reported on his winter plans for Weaver book II.

**Kennet & Avon** (Nick Grundy) – increase in number of short term stoppages for water supplies, some due to problems with pumps.

- Bradford on Avon pump was badly designed and drew in rubbish in the water. Fixing it would be costly and Nick believed CRT would continue to mangle with what they had, rather than replacing.

**London** (Michael Pinnock) – serious water loss on Regent's Canal; lack of towpath access at Camden lock; collisions by new electric powered day boats; increasing number of out-of-order paddles; success at Carpenters Road lock opening; gate leakage to be focus of winter stoppages; boating problems due to poor day-to-day maintenance on GU.

- Concerns about persistently recurring dry pounds were noted, with Richard commenting on the lack of consistency in water levels. It was felt that the region was not planning ahead but was responding to issues as they arose.
- Laura reported that there had been a radio report about London authorities seeking to ban wood and coal burning stoves in certain areas. Rupert believed this was not specifically aimed at boaters but only at some residential areas, but Sue countered that it did include boaters.

**Manchester, Pennine & Potteries (north)** (Ian McCarthy) – Marple lock 15; locks on Cheshire flight moving in; junction restrictions by chandlers at Middlewich; Macclesfield dredging started; successful Bollington Folk & Boat Festival; Bream on the Huddersfield Narrow; better organised stoppage programme.

**Manchester, Pennine & Potteries (south)** (Rupert Smedley) – Caldon summit problems; IWA & CUCT complaint re end of Leek Arm; good turnout at Huddlesford event.

- Leek Arm regrowth was particularly bad at the winding hole.

**North East** (David Lowe) – Leeds lock tail gates replacement; planned dredging Dewsbury Arm, Calder & Hebble; Partnership topic on preserving historic craft; sand traffic Hull to Leeds; charging proposal dropped for use of Goole Docks; additional visitor moorings at Saltaire on the L&L.

- Nick added that it was great to have a good news story about Goole Docks.

**North Wales & Borders** (Iain MacTavish) – more boats getting stuck at Hurleston bottom, CRT's stoppage and planned survey; personnel changes upcoming in CRT management team; Partnership's Annual Showcase in October and User Forum in November.

- Iain added that Plover had become stuck in Hurleston bottom and they were no longer considering a mooring on the Welsh.
- Depth was another issue to be addressed, especially at Bettisfield. Sue added that Mountbatten & Jellicoe on coaling runs might help with depth maintenance.
- Sue added that dredging was scheduled for the Shropshire Union.

**North West** (Daniel Mawdsley) – no report

**South East** (David Daines) – Boating Sub Group meeting October; moorings adjacent to Master's Bridge, N Oxford canal; extensive dredging near Leighton Buzzard; Cowroast lock walls to be pressure grouted; Stoke Bruerne Village at War issues; CRT Vintage Village at Foxton; encroachment by wide boats onto inappropriate GU sections.

- Jackdaw pound being dredged (Leighton to Three Locks).
- Foxton gates being replaced. Flight will be staffed by seasonal lock keepers and volunteers.

**South Wales & Severn** (Norman Mitchell) – verbal report at meeting:

- Gloucester Lock had been closed on a normal boating day due to lack of staff.
- The Oliver Cromwell had returned to Gloucester Dock.

- Gloucester Museum – retirement of current manager, short-term replacement leaving for Ashmolean Museum. New appointee awaited.
- Leases sold on 3 ground floor shop fronts.
- Problems with litter from local Wetherspoons.
- Sharpness – there was to be new lighting and work on sluices.
- Sue asked if the strong stream warnings were operational and Norman would check..
- Droitwich - problems with foliage and weed growth to be followed up with local Waterways Manager.

**Thames** (Bernard Hales) – River User Group meeting October; management of EA moorings.

**West Midlands** (Sarah Edgson) – list of WM rallies; Pratts Mill Railway Bridge; Lock 4 Walsall vandalism, culprit charged; Filance Lock width problems; summer stoppages on BCN; £1.2m revamp of towpath Smethwick Galton Bridge to Dudley , part of improved Midland cycle routes; Gas Street’s James Brindley pub reopening and name change; possible demolition of Flapper pub on Cambrian Wharf.

## 9 **MATTERS ARISING** from previous meetings not already covered (see Action List)

- 9.1 **8.9 May 2017, Marple locks development** – Sue, Mike Carter and Brian McGuigan were due to have discussions with CRT’s Richard Parry and Stuart Mills. Sue commented on the recurring issue of conflict between owners of new canalside houses and the provision of moorings and service facilities for boats.
- 9.2 **8.9 May 2017, Newcastle Road lock, T&M** - it was pertinent always to ask for sight of CRT’s risk assessment each time a lock was changed to comply with alleged Health & Safety issues.
- 9.3 **11.2 January 2017, Edgbaston tunnel towpath** – Sarah E commented that the work was likely to go ahead and widened towpath section might be made to be removable. The existing towpath through the tunnel was already very narrow and she believed there was another cycle route available that cyclists might prefer to use instead.
- 9.4 **7.7 October 2016, I-Spy leaflet** – although work was still on-going, Sue asked Phil to send her a copy of the existing leaflet for use at Ellesmere Port gathering, Easter 2018.
- 9.5 **8.4 October 2016, Recordings of canal people and stories** – the work on digitising some recordings was on-going. Sue would ask Roger Fuller about the recording of Nick Hills reminiscences, Ros would follow up Mike Askin’s recording of Malcolm Braine’s talk.

## 10 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 10.1 **List of pinch points**– Nick commented that there had been no update of the list of pinch points on the club website. He had compiled a list from cruising notes; he would send it to Sue for annotation, thence to Ros to update the website. Sue would also pursue these through CRT’s NAG and local waterways managers. Sue believed that CRT sometimes baulked at the cost of a whole flight of locks to be repaired, and it was often more effective to identify individual locks one at a time.
- 10.2 **David Blagrove Charity Trust** – Iain reported that charity status had been applied for, but its aims were unclear. There may be further information at the next meeting.
- 10.3 **July/August committee meetings** – Iain proposed that, in view of the difficulty of finding a convenient date during the summer holiday season, the committee should not have a meeting in July or August. Any urgent decisions/discussions could be carried out by email instead.

## 12 **DATES, TIMES & LOCATIONS OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- |                    |      |   |
|--------------------|------|---|
| • 25 November 2017 | 11am | Lapworth Village Hall, prior to Social at 2pm |
| • 13 January 2018  | 11am | The Samuel Barlow, Alvecote                   |
| • 3 March 2018     | 10am | Lapworth Village Hall, prior to AGM at 2pm    |

The meeting closed at 5.25 pm.

Phil Prettyman  
Chairman