

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 11.00am on Saturday 20 October 2018
at The Samuel Barlow, Alvecote, Tamworth B78 1AS

PRESENT Phil Prettyman (Chair), Clair Butler, Sue Cawson, Kathryn Dodington, Sarah Edgson, Nick Grundy, Mike Harrison, Iain MacTavish, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Penny Ross, Rupert Smedley, Laura Sturrock.
HNBC member Charles Harlow in attendance to speak on item 3 Nb HARDY.

Phil welcomed Kathryn to the meeting as Acting Secretary, having been co-opted to the role by email agreement of committee members.

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Richard Booth, David Daines, Bernard Hales, Paul Hunter, Sarah Levick, David Lowe, Ian McCarthy, Norman Mitchell, Michael Pinnock, Alison Smedley, Amy-Alys Tillson, James Tidy.

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

The minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 21 July 2018 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 **Nb HARDY**

Charles explained his BWB boating background, his work as a volunteer helping to preserve Tooley's boatyard in Banbury and interest in restoration of the HARDY. Representing a group of enthusiasts, he sought the club's endorsement of a grant application to the Heritage Lottery Memorial Fund which would be used for docking, a hull survey and maintenance work to preserve the boat in its current state. If the survey indicated that the hull was viable, then there would be further fund raising to pay for repairs. There would also be some events in 2020 to celebrate the history and anniversary of the canal.

Nick recommended that the HARDY be registered with National Historic Ships Register, Sue commented that NHS could sometimes provide small grants, and Rupert advised that any grant application should mention on-going use, education and maintenance plan, not just the initial restoration. Charles confirmed that the group was aware of the expertise of Ade Polglase and Malcolm Webster in working on historic wooden craft.

Phil explained that the club had a policy of not donating funds to individual boats, but that the committee would be happy to read through the grant application form. Charles would send it to the Secretary in due course.

4 **SOCIAL - 17 NOVEMBER 2018 at WHITTINGTON**

Nick to present the talk, Ros to bring tea and coffee, Sue to purchase milk and cakes. Committee members to wear name badges and to help with the meet-and-greet, especially for new members.

Tombola – Nick had already received several items but would welcome more. Laura agreed to help Liz G to sell tickets. It was agreed to donate proceeds to Lichfield & Hatherton's Tunnel Vision appeal as it was local to the venue and struggling to meet its fund raising target. Nick would prepare a poster advertising the recipients.

Club's PA and projector – Richard had arranged to leave equipment at Audlem with Sue who would bring it to the meeting. Nick to bring his own set of equipment as backup. Phil to bring anti-slip mats and an extension lead.

5 **AGM - 2 MARCH 2019 at WHITTINGTON**

5.1 **Speaker** – Phil had approached Eric McDowall and was awaiting final confirmation [received post meeting]. Sue suggested Tony Condor as an alternative or future speaker and would send details to Kathryn.

5.2 **Elections** – in order to conform to the usual 3-year rolling pattern, the following posts were due for election:
Chairman (Phil Prettyman) Membership Secretary (Penny Ross)
IWA Liaison (Alison Smedley) Minutes Secretary (Ros Prettyman)

5.3 **Co-opted posts for election** – the committee had made the following co-options since the previous AGM:
Secretary (Kathryn Dodington) following Paul Hunter's resignation
Awards (Paul Hunter) following James Tidy's resignation
Press Officer (James Tidy) to hold the post jointly with Amy-Alys Tillson

Kathryn would add notification of the posts in 5.2 and 5.3 to the Notice of Meeting to go out with Newsletter 2018/4

- 5.4 **Vacancies** – at a previous meeting, Phil had explained the reason for seeking a Vice Chair, and Clair had given notice that she wished to stand down from the role of Shop Organiser. These vacancies had been advertised in Newsletter 2018/3 but no nominations had been received. In addition, Val gave notice that she would probably not stand for re-election when her current term as Newsletter Editor ended in 2020. Phil would again mention these posts at the Social.

Iain outlined the Shop problems of customer expectation of immediate delivery (influenced by Amazon etc) and stock storage space. He also identified a general background trade with peaks when a new book was available or in the run up to Christmas. Laura pointed out that 2nd hand book sales were profitable but were not listed on-line and Rupert asked for a breakdown of income from new and 2nd hand books. Clair would provide a profits analysis. Some thought was given to ways in which the Shop might be managed differently, in the hope of attracting more volunteers. Suggestions were: a job-share, one to deal with on-line orders and the other with events; to take only 2nd-hand books to events plus one “book of the month” from new stock; to sell books through a specialist outlet; to have a presence at canal based events but not the full stock. Clair commented that not as many new members were recruited via the Shop as in the past. It was agreed to discuss this again at the January 2019 committee meeting.

5.5 **Area Reps and CRT’s new Regions**

Phil asked whether the club should re-designate the areas covered by club Reps to align with CRT’s new Region boundaries, or whether Reps should follow whole canals even when these crossed Region boundaries. Kathryn commented that some of the new Regions were based on council boundaries but others were arbitrary. Phil emphasised the importance of the club having a presence at any CRT user group meetings to balance the drift towards non-boaters, which was being driven by CRT’s well-being initiative, in turn driven by the search for government grant. The club’s role was to monitor and promote canal infrastructure and to highlight issues from a boater’s perspective. He was also worried about differing standards of maintenance from Region to Region.

A first draft proposal was put forward for further discussion:

Region	Name	Proposed area
London & South East	David D Michael	Grand Junction to Braunston turn, plus Oxford Southern Grand Junction and London
West Midlands	Sarah E Rupert A N Other	To be decided
East Midlands	Mike Kathryn	To West Bridge in Leicester or possibly bottom of Foxton Watching brief, Stoke B to Leicester summit
Wales & South West	Norman Nick	Current patch Watching brief on K&A
North West	Ian McC Iain MacT A N Other	Current patch Watching brief on Llangollen, possibly until Montgomery event in 2021 L&L, Lancaster
Yorkshire & North East	David L A N Other	Current patch Chesterfield
Thames	Bernard	Unchanged
East	Sarah L	Unchanged

Sue emphasised how important it was to ensure the new Regional Directors and Advisory Board chairs had hands-on experience of boating, as many did not come from a boating background.

Ros commented that, in order to attract more Area Reps to volunteer, it might be necessary to amend the club’s Constitution to reduce the burden of attending meetings. [Post meeting note: Ros withdrew this suggestion and it was agreed by email discussion that the Constitution’s wording was already sufficiently flexible.]

6 **GATHERINGS**

6.1 **Hebden Bridge – Spring Bank Holiday, May 2019**

Phil reported that a good first meeting in September with CRT personnel had secured their support and a larger team (Laura, Clair, Sue, Iain, Ros, Phil, Peter Oates, Di & Paul Monahan) would visit Hebden Bridge the following week on 23 October to look at the site and a possible venue for social events. They would meet the local CRT supervisor for discussions.

Sue asked if floating traders would be attending and it was agreed their presence would be limited to existing club members.

Mike reported that to date only a few members had contacted him to book in. He would collect the printed booking forms when issued. Phil would again promote the venue at the Social and booking forms would need to go out with Newsletter 2018/4 and also be available to collect at Whittington. Although convoys were not required through Manchester, the booking form would suggest dates for groups of boats to travel together in order for CRT to manage the water supply. This would be similar to the arrangements for the Basingstoke gathering. Nick mentioned that the Bridgewater restriction of one “free” passage and no return within one month might cause a problem. The licence was £40.00. Sue commented that CRT hoped to have Marple lock 11 open in Spring 2019. Mike suggested asking Paul Monahan if he would like to act as harbourmaster at the event, and also asked the team to enquire about facilities for campervans.

6.2 **The Port, Easter 2019 (19-22 April)**

Sue reported she was due to attend the next planning meeting and confirmed she was happy to continue as the club’s liaison. Val would mention details, when available, in the newsletter.

6.3 **Audlem, July 2019**

Phil reported that Peter Sylvester had asked if the Audlem gathering could be badged as a club event, in a similar way that the Gnosall CanalFest event was being badged by IWA. Peter S would organise it as usual, the club would simply lend its name and insurance cover.

It was pointed out that our own club events were always private, for our members only, and not public events. If the club were to badge the Audlem gathering, it would have to be made clear that it was for club members only, in order to comply with our insurance cover, and all the paperwork (event booking, risk assessment etc) would have to be scrutinised by the committee. The evening BBQ would have to be covered by separate public liability insurance. Sue was asked to talk with Peter S and explore the issue further.

7 **ARCHIVE**

7.1 **New items** - Kathryn had received a number of items (craft control documents) donated to the club by June Lyons, Binkie Bush’s daughter (see Secretary’s report 9.2 in appendix) with the proviso that they must be made available in the public domain. Kathryn suggested the items be scanned for club records and then sent to Warwick Records office for public access. Kathryn would copy some of the documents and circulate to the committee.

7.2 **Scanning, copying, copyright** - Val pointed out that scanning documents was labour intensive and we should identify who would do it. Laura commented that we should devise an official gift receipt and confirmation that copyright was transferred to the club. At the Social, Phil would make an appeal for help with scanning, but guidelines should be established on quality, format, receipt confirmation for consistency of approach. Laura and Clair expressed an interest in helping.

7.2 **Long term storage** – Iain had investigated storage options in the ex-salt works, but believed the club did not have a sufficient quantity to make it worthwhile. There was a charge each time the material was accessed. Val had 3 or 4 boxes worth, it was not known how much Richard had. Kathryn suggested maybe passing the material on to museums and records offices, but compiling a catalogue of where it was stored. Rupert wondered if the club could charge for access to its records. Nick suggested that we should in any case publish a list, on the website, of what records we already had. It was agreed that we should do so, and continue to access any donated records or recordings while we looked for a better long term solution.

7.3 **Digital backup** – Ros reported a conversation with Richard about the failure of the club’s external hard drive which he held and had been used to back-up the scanned records he had produced. Rather than purchase a new one, Kathryn suggested purchasing some i-Cloud storage and Ros would investigate options.

8 **INSURANCE FOR HISTORIC BOATS**

Nick reported on the problems he had encountered getting insurance for the BEATTY where its composite construction alarmed some insurers. Other problems areas identified were: loading and towing (Laura), allowing public visitors into back cabins at events (Clair), getting a valuation (Nick). Rupert commented that registered brokers were most appropriate for valuations, rather than surveyors. It was agreed that there was a need to “educate” insurers about historic boats and then to supply members with a list of sympathetic companies. Kathryn would contact a number of insurance companies to ascertain their knowledge of historic vessels and their requirements, and might set up a small working party to research the topic. Iain suggested a specialist broker might be found. Sarah had reported that GJW were still prepared to offer a discount to club members. It was agreed that the club would not enter into a sole agency agreement with, nor endorse, any one company or broker.

9 **WRITTEN REPORTS** had been received from the following committee members and are contained in **Appendix** 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.

9.1 **Chairman** (Phil Prettyman) - *Boat Museum plan for disposal of boats; APPWG; Defra clean air consultation.*

- Boat Museum disposals. It was agreed that it was better for the club to be represented at the advisory meetings where it could have some influence on the outcomes for boats, although there was a danger of being perceived to be in league with the Museum. It was important to make our participation clear to members.

9.2 **Secretary** (Kathryn Dodington) – *paperwork donation; AGM notification.*

- Forms for the club’s insurance had to be completed by 16 November – Clair and Laura would help Kathryn.
- Kathryn would arrange to meet Paul to collect club records and documents held by the Secretary.

9.3 **Treasurer** (Laura Sturrock) – *total funds; expenses claims; subscription rates.*

- Committee expenses – Laura reminded members that travel was paid @ £0.25/mile for attending committee meetings and external events on behalf of the club. If travelling by train, a ticket should be submitted. Expense claims must be submitted by the next meeting on 17 November ready for the year-end on 30 November.
- Subscriptions – if the Shop’s activities were to be reduced, we needed to warn members that subscriptions would have to increase to £15/20. Although not necessary this year, Laura would research an accurate figure to cover costs if the club’s surplus were to be reduced over time. Iain commented on the administrative burden that would be incurred in a change in subscription.
- Bank signatories – after the AGM elections, cheque signatories would need to be changed.
- On-line signatories – 2 signatures were required to make on-line payments, the constitution currently defining eligible committee members as Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor. In effect there was a reduced pool as Val was uncomfortable with on-line transactions and Phil’s access code needed refreshing or restarting. Laura would draft and circulate a motion for the next AGM to amend the constitution to add Membership Secretary plus one other committee member to the pool. Phil would chase up the activation of his access code and Laura would start to prepare the paperwork ready for after the AGM.
- Club funds – currently standing at £25k, it was agreed to have a further discussion on whether to donate some funds to a good cause or to retain it in the bank. Ros to add this as an agenda item for January.

9.4 **Membership Secretary** (Penny Ross) – *new members; membership numbers; labels; standard letters; server issues; renewals.*

- New members were approved:

Name	Membership No.	Boat
Jim Fleming	1917	-
Greg Beardsall	1918	-
Christine Thomas	1920	-

- Penny circulated a list of 31 members whose subscriptions had not been renewed on time and which were now in a “grace” period before expiring. She had already sent individual reminders, at a cost to the club, and now asked for help from committee members should they encounter these members socially. Val would add a reminder to the next Newsletter that no further copies would be sent unless the subscriptions were renewed. Penny would provide an up-to-date list of “grace” subscriptions with the labels.
- Penny also provided a list of 10 cancelled subscriptions from January-October 2018 and a further 16 subscriptions that had expired in the same period.
- It was a continuing problem that members did not notify her of new home addresses and email addresses.

9.5 **Archive** (Richard Booth)

9.6 **Newsletter Editor** (Val Roberts) – *Alan Faulkner; IWA vice presidents; Boundary Post editor; Robert Wilson*

- Kathryn would prepare an article introducing herself, ready for publication after the AGM elections.
- Robert Wilson obituary – it was suggested that Val contact David D or Paul.
- Museum article on the GWENDOLINE – Val would check with Margaret Harrison when it should be published.

9.7 **Shop** (Clair Butler) – *shop sales at Audlem, on-line, postal; 2nd hand book; Weaver books; new stock.*

- Tooley’s Boatyard book was now available. Clair was asked to purchase 20 copies as stock and to send details to Val for the newsletter and to Ros for the on-line shop.

- 9.8 **Navigation** (Sue Cawson) – *NAG; winter stoppages; vegetation Napton; dredging meeting November; drought meeting; CRT water resources data; Trent trip; Filance lock.*
- It was agreed to support the latest CRT guidance video on how to navigate safely through canal tunnels.
 - Sue would edit her report for use in the newsletter.
- 9.9 **Press** (Amy-Alys Tillson & James Tidy)
- 9.10 **Website & Social Media** (Ros Prettyman) – *website updates; server problems; enquiries via contact form; Facebook posts.*
- Ros raised the general point that members of the public used the website contact form to ask for booking-in details for various canal events. It was agreed to add a statement to the website calendar to make it clear the club was listing events as a service and was neither promoting nor endorsing them. Ros would speak to Steve about adding a disclaimer. [Post meeting note: the following statement had been added “This calendar is provided as an information service to members and other website visitors. HNBC does not promote, organise or endorse events listed here, except where specifically stated. We cannot assist with enquiries or bookings for any other event.”]
- 9.11 **External Organisations** – IWA Liaison (Alison Smedley) *IWA boaters’ facilities; 2019 Festival of Water; value of waterway restoration.*
- 9.12 **Area Reports**
- East** (Sarah Levick)
- East Midlands** (Mike Harrison)
- Kennet & Avon** (Nick Grundy) *water shortages; swing bridge breakdowns; boat sinking*
- London** (Michael Pinnock) *CRT enforcement; locking up locks; R Lee & Hertford Union; eco mooring proposals Islington; privatised light work boatyards; R Lee oil spill; Water Ouzel; R Lee water shortage; London boat numbers; Tottenham Lock vegetation.*
- Manchester, Pennines & Potteries north** (Ian McCarthy) *new Region boundaries & coverage; user group meetings.*
- Manchester, Pennines & Potteries south** (Rupert Smedley) *Caldon traffic; Leek arm; CRT Regions; tunnel book.*
- North East** (David Lowe) *lock opening times; Stourton Wharf development; boat trip; Mainmast Shipping; new Advisory Board; Devsburry dredging.*
- North Wales & Border** (Iain MacTavish) *CRT Regions & user groups; Middlewich breach open weekend; Hurleston preparatory work; reed bed below Wrenbury.*
- North West** (Daniel Mawdsley)
- South East** (David Daines) *Hillmorton; variable water levels; winding hole signs; Fenny Stratford lock pub.*
- South Wales & Severn** (Norman Mitchell) *R Severn water levels; Gloucester Docks silt.*
- Thames** (Bernard Hales)
- West Midlands** (Sarah Edgson) *Rallies; stoppages & repairs; national events in central Birmingham; CRT Region*

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

- July 18 **Southerly venues for Social & AGM** Phil would mention in his next newsletter piece 2018/4 and would also analyse the spread of home addresses of our membership base. He would also ask for opinions at the Social itself.
- Venue for boat gathering** A member had raised the question of a southerly venue for a boat gathering, but the committee had tried in vain to find a suitable London one in 2016 and had chosen the Basingstoke Canal.
- July 18 **Awards mini plaques** Kathryn would take them to Paul as co-opted Awards Officer, to have them engraved for distribution to the previous year’s and last year’s winners.
- July 18 **Correct information about job titles** had been received by Mike in time for the 2018/3 posting.
- July 18 **Website maintenance** Invoice had been paid.

- July 18 **Sir Frank Price autobiography** Clair had purchased a copy but Richard Parry already had one.
- July 18 **Montgomery “Bridge the Gap” fund** Donation had been sent.
- July 18 **Update on Sculptor** Kathryn reported that a tender had gone out for gunnel replacements. Friends of the Canal Museum had pledged to cover costs of Whitworth bolts and a quote had been sought.
- July 18 **Oral histories** Ros reported that Teresa Fuller was continuing to work on transcribing the Ike Argent recordings but that it was slow work.
Training for recording oral histories It was believed that John Benson, archivist at the Boat Museum, might offer training. Kathryn to discuss with Laura.
- April 18 **Tunnel Records** Val showed a proof copy of the transcriptions she had made. Phil thanked her for the many hours of work involved. It was agreed that a simple low cost format, similar to the Newsletter, might be most suitable perhaps with the addition of photographs of some of the boats in the lists and of Gordon’s father. Clair and Iain would approach him to show the first proof copy and to enquire about photos or an interview. Nick reported that Martin Fuller had notes of an interview with Bert Bailey, a former tunnel keeper, and would check if these could be added to the booklet.
- Nov 17 **Voice-to-Text software** Phil reported that “Dragon” @ £258 seemed the most reliable and sophisticated available. It was agreed to note this information and to consider purchasing it next time the need arose.

11 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Email discussion threads - It was noted that some smart phone operating systems were displaying HNBC as sender of messages rather than the committee member’s name. It was agreed to ask all committee members to add a signature block to their replies to HNBC GoogleGroup messages.

12 **DATES AND TIMES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

17 November 2018	10.30am	Whittington Village Hall, prior to the Social
12 January 2019	11.00am	The Samuel Barlow, Alvecote (Kathryn to check availability)
2 March 2019	10.00am	Whittington Village Hall, prior to AGM

The meeting closed at 4.20pm

Phil Prettyman
 Chairman