

## **BROADS SOCIETY**

### **Minutes of the Main Committee held on 15 January 2009 at Broad House Hotel, Wroxham**

**Present:** Peter Horsefield (Chairman), Keith Bacon (Vice-Chairman),  
Chris Pulley (Treasurer), Richard Baguley, Gordon Craig, Colin Dye, Anne  
Horsefield, Paul Howes, Patrick Larnar, Richard Starling and  
Jill Wickens

**In attendance:** Carol Palfrey (Administrator)

#### **1 Welcome to New Members**

The Chairman welcomed Colin Dye and Richard Starling to their first meeting and informed the Committee. The third new member, Chris Shallcross, had decided that he could not give sufficient time to Society business and had therefore tendered his resignation.

#### **2 Apologies for absence**

Nick Barne and Peter Waller

#### **3 Minutes of the Meeting of 4 November 2008**

The minutes, having been circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record, subject to the following amendments:

Minute 7, para 1, last line: "to decide on an objection independently".

Minute 12, para 4, first line: insert "PPS25" after "Officers"

Minute 15, para 1, second line: "The NRS-C had said that they could not support the proposal unless ..."

Minute 15, para 4: delete

Minute 15, Update on Flood Protection Work: insert "technical" after "contentious".

Re-number two final items 19 and 20.

#### **4 Matters Arising**

- 4.1 Future size and membership of the BA and DEFRA consultation (Minute 6)  
A copy of the response to the consultation by CNP had been circulated. The Society's views on direct elections to the Authority was at odds with those of CNP and Committee members felt strongly that the Society should have had the opportunity to comment on the response before it was submitted. Paul Howes undertook to raise this matter with CNP.
- 4.2 Planning Workshop – "Future of the Coast" (Minute 18.2)  
Martin George had attended this event on the Society's behalf. Keith Bacon reported that the intention was to integrate coastal defence and planning along the coast. No progress could be made until a single strategy could be agreed by all three Councils concerned: Waveney, Gt Yarmouth and North Norfolk. At present, only Waveney had no objections to the proposals.
- 4.3 River Chet (Minute 16)  
Pat Larnar drew attention to an article in the latest edition of "Anglia Afloat" on the subject of the difficulty of navigation on the Chet caused by the installation of large steel posts.  
Richard Starling pointed out that there was a long history associated with reduction in width of the Chet.

#### 4.4 Pegasus Site (Minute 16)

It was noted that there was no longer a "Chief Planning Officer" at the Broads Authority.

#### 4.5 BA Working Groups (Minute 18.18)

Martin George had, through his membership of the Broads Forum, been invited to the first meeting of people invited to consider the strategy of the Whole Valley project. The Ant Valley had been chosen as the front runner.

Peter Horsefield confirmed that he would attend if Martin was otherwise engaged. Keith Bacon pointed out that the BA "whole valley" approach had been modified to include only those parts located in the Executive Area. It was agreed to include an enquiry about the role of the Valley Working Groups at the special meeting with BA.

### **5 Treasurer's Report**

The Chairman congratulated Chris Pulley on the clarity of the financial information presented.

#### 5.1 Current Financial Position

The Treasurer had circulated an account of Receipts and Payments for the 3 quarters to 31 December 2008. He explained that this type of accounting was acceptable to the Charity Commission and would be less time consuming to audit. However, he intended to prepare more detailed (but still comprehensible) accruals accounts for the annual report to members.

It was noted that the cost of the AGM included room hire, guest lunches, sound system hire and production of the special booklet. Gordon Craig offered to provide for the next Committee meeting, options for a cheaper sound system.

#### 5.2 Overview of Society's Finances

The Treasurer recommended that there should be no increase subscriptions as long as the Society had sufficient reserves in the General Fund to cover expenses. It was noted that the 500 Club would no longer be classed as a restricted fund following the decision of the Club's Trustees to transfer its accumulated reserves to the Society.

#### 5.3 Funding for Broadsword – Chainsaw Training

Peter Horsefield had spoken to the Broads Authority about chainsaw training and discovered that it would be much cheaper than he had anticipated because the Authority would provide training in-house at no charge. The only cost would be an examination fee of £100 per person, a proportion of which would be paid by the BA. He therefore had no hesitation in recommending to the Committee that funds should be allocated to Broadsword for this purpose. Speaking from personal experience, Richard Starling enquired whether in-house training would satisfy the requirements for insurance purposes. It was pointed out that the Broads Authority was responsible for insuring all volunteers and it was therefore not a matter of concern for the Society.

The Chairman undertook to contact David Capp, Broadsword Co-ordinator.

#### 5.4 Go Electric Project

Members expressed concern at the shortcomings identified in the audit. The project had failed to deliver on a number of its objectives.

Despite these concerns, it was agreed not to pursue the matter further.

### **6 Chairman's Report on Meeting with Stephen Johnson, BA Chairman**

Peter Horsefield reported on a wide ranging discussion during a very productive meeting. He had prepared a brief report, agreed with Stephen Johnson, which he would post on the Main Committee Forum. The main focus of the discussion had been the relationship

between the Society and the Broads Authority. The following provides a brief summary of the issues covered:

- Problems arising from decisions about control of navigation made when the Broads Authority was established.
- Agreement that the Authority is necessary.
- Lack of agreement that the Authority is well managed, particularly with regard to the Broads Bill.
- Need for care in handling the relationship between the two organisations, particularly because three members of the Society's Main Committee, who are all Trustees, were petitioners against the Broads Bill.
- The need for each organisation to have a clear understanding of the other's position and for there to be openness and transparency in all communications and dealings.
- The benefits of joint working where the Authority's duties and the Society's aspirations are congruent.
- Any challenge from the Society would only be made following agreement by the Trustees and formally transmitted to the Authority. Any criticism would be directed at policies or decisions, and never at the performance or personal characteristics of any individual.
- Regular meetings to identify objectives and set up formal processes to achieve them.
- Acceptance that the Broads Bill must run its course.
- Problems over obtaining external funding for dredging . Suggestion mooted of putting together a joint team to find a solution.
- Agreement to work together towards achieving the concept of the "Integrated Broads Experience.
- Agreed protocol for formal communications.
- Planning

## **7 Agenda and arrangements for meeting between Committee and BA representatives**

Richard Baguley undertook to draft an agenda, as for the previous meeting with the BA, and post it on the Committee forum for comment. Issues suggested for inclusion: tolls; dredging; planning; quay headings; navigation problems (particularly on the River Chet); effect of work by BESL on navigation and moorings.

## **8 Role of Administrator**

The Administrator had circulated a list of her current duties and responsibilities. She pointed out that the list had expanded considerably since her appointment and thought that Committee members would find it useful to be aware of the work being carried out on their behalf. She requested the removal of two items: (a) duties relating to public events such as the Norfolk Show and (b) marketing of advertising space in "Harnser". This was agreed. (See minutes 10 and 11.1 respectively). Subject to these changes she was happy with the role as described and members confirmed that they saw no reason for any further changes.

## **9 Allocation of Responsibilities to Committee and other Members**

Details of the allocations prior to the AGM elections had been circulated. The following were agreed for 2009 (supporting members in brackets):

Navigation – Richard Baguley (Patrick Larner)

Environment & Sustainability – Anne Horsfield (Richard Starling and Keith Bacon)

Publicity – Gordon Craig (Jill Wickens)

Social Activities – Jill Wickens

Broadsword – David Capp

Website – Richard Baguley

Membership – Richard Baguley and Paul Howes (liaising with Gordon Craig)  
“Harnser” – Jill Wickens  
Campaign for National Parks – Paul Howes  
Broads Forum – Martin George (substitute Colin Dye)  
Upper Thurne Working Group – Martin George  
Middle Thurne Working Group – Anne Horsefield (Peter Horsefield)  
Barton Broad Management Group – Anne Horsefield (Peter Horsefield)  
Whole Valley Group – Martin George (Peter Horsefield)  
Individual Valley Groups – to be decided in due course  
Economy and Tourism – Colin Dye  
Strategic Planning/LDF – Patrick Larnar and Keith Bacon

Flood Alleviation Group  
Co-ordinator – Pat Larnar (Chris Groves – to be confirmed)  
Members – Keith Bacon, Anne Horsefield. Administrator to check whether Robert Paul wished to remain a member.

Finance Sub-Committee  
Treasurer, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Administrator, plus President (by invitation)

Editorial Sub-Committee  
Jill Wickens, Nicholas Barne, Trevor Warren and John Wheeley

The following points were noted:

- David Capp intended to provide a written report on Broadsword for each edition of “Harnser” and it was therefore agreed that no regular report to the Committee would be required.
- Ken Barnes was the Society’s nominated Trustee for the How Hill Trust. Paul Howes undertook to investigate the terms of the How Hill Trust constitution.
- Broads Society members (Keith Bacon and Ken Barnes) were members of the North East Norfolk Group of Coastal Parishes although not as Society representatives.

## **10 Public Events**

### **10.1 Royal Norfolk Show**

It was proposed by Richard Baguley, seconded by Patrick Larnar, and unanimously agreed that the Society should not take part in the Royal Norfolk Show 2009. The grounds for this decision were:

- Insufficient volunteers to man the stand or prepare display boards
- No new members had been recruited
- The Royal Norfolk Show was predominantly an agricultural show

It was agreed to review the position annually.

### **10.2 Green Boat Show**

It was proposed by Paul Howes, seconded by Patrick Larnar, and unanimously agreed, that the Society should cease its involvement in this event. The main reason for this decision was that no one was willing to take on the work carried out by Peter Howe and the late Tony Fogarty. The Chairman would write to Peter Howe. Committee members were of the view that, as the Society had undertaken to underwrite any loss on this event, it was entitled to retain funds remaining in the Green Boat Account.

### **10.3 Museum of the Broads Event 9 August 2009**

The Museum had invited the Society to take part in this event. It was agreed that Patrick Larnar should contact Di Cornell and Pam Masters to discuss whether this event could be used to commemorate the Society's donation to the development project.

The Administrator would arrange to take the display Boards to Gordon Craig so that a suitable display could be prepared.

## **11 Harnser**

### **11.1 Advertisements**

Jill Wickens confirmed that she would be willing to take on all aspects of advertising with the exception of billing which would continue to the Administrator's responsibility.

### **11.2 Mailing**

It was noted that Anne Horsefield had helped with mailing of the last issue and was willing to continue with this role. Lesley Bonshor had also volunteered to help if required.

### **11.3 Editor's Report**

The latest issue, comprising 40 pages in full colour, had cost £996 and had been posted using normal second class mail (currently 27p). It was agreed that future editions should be of equal size.

## **12 Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Charitable Trust**

The Administrator read out the following progress report provided by Nick Barne:

There were now seven Trustees: Nick Barne (Chairman), Bryan Read, Stephen Johnson, Peter Howe, Douglas Munro, Gillie Stapleton and Kit Cator (Secretary). Two more Trustees were required nominated by the Broads Society and the Broads Authority respectively.

It was proposed by Peter Horsefield, seconded by Jill Wickens, and unanimously agreed, that Keith Bacon should be nominated as the Society's Trustee.

## **13 Broads Forum**

Issues covered included:

Relaxation of the guidance for compliance with PPS25

Direct elections and parish council representation

Wensum sediment management plan

Allowances for members of the Authority and Navigation Committee

It was noted that the next meeting would include a presentation by the Environment Agency on the Broadland Rivers Catchment Flood Management Plan.

Richard Starling suggested the Forum should consider wider participation in litter collection schemes.

There had been no further debate on live-aboards.

## **14 CNP**

In a note circulated with the papers, Peter Howe had expressed his willingness to continue as the Society's representative. Members acknowledged that Peter had been an excellent representative but it was felt that it was essential for the Society's representative to be a member of the Main Committee. Paul Howes had therefore been appointed (see Minute 9) to take on this role. Paul undertook to contact Peter and discuss possible collaboration.

The Administrator undertook to send 6 copies of recruitment literature to the South Downs Society and one copy to Paul Howes.

## **15 Planning Issues**

### 15.1 Further Review of Society policy

At the last meeting it had been agreed that it should not be left to one sub-committee member to decide on an objection independently. As the Northern Rivers decision to support a planning application for the development of Hunsett Mill had been queried by some members of the Main Committee, it was agreed that sub-committee members should consult colleagues if they proposed to make any response other than “no objection” or “no comment”.

It was agreed that a small sub-group comprising Richard Baguley, Patrick Larner, Keith Bacon, Gordon Craig and Peter Waller should draw up recommendations on the handling of planning applications for consideration by the Main Committee.

In view of concerns about the Broads Authority’s handling of planning applications, it was agreed that “Planning” should be included as an item on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting with Stephen Johnson and John Packman *[subsequently confirmed as 7pm on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at Broad House]*.

### 15.2 Northern Rivers Sub-Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2008 had been circulated. None of the current sub-committee members had been willing to take on the role of Chairman. However, Lesley Bonshor had volunteered to become Vice-Chairman and Peter Horsefield had therefore invited her to attend future meetings of the Main Committee.

### 15.3 Southern Rivers Sub-Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2008 had been circulated.

## **16 A.O.B.**

### 16.1 Website

Four additional members had joined the Forum since the AGM

### 16.2 Stokesby Conservation Area

The proposal had been rejected by the local community by a majority of 86 to 53.

### 16.3 “Harnser”

It was noted that in future the regular report by Hilary Franzen would be clearly attributed to the Broads Authority.

### 16.4 Waterways for Tomorrow

The proposal by DEFRA to integrate the whole of the UK waterway network by summer 2010 was noted with concern. If the Waterways Board took over responsibility for navigation in The Broads, there was a risk of the Sandford principle being applied.

### 16.5 Re-introduction of Sea Eagles

The Chairman undertook to write to Natural England, the RSPB and Anglian Water voicing the Society’s strong objections to the proposals.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10.00 pm