

## **BROADS SOCIETY**

### **Minutes of the Main Committee held on Tuesday 14 May 2013 at the Hotel Wroxham, Wroxham**

**Present:** Robin Godber (Chairman); Keith Bacon (Vice-Chairman),  
Nick Ball, Colin Dye, Ian Masters, Richard Reid, Paul Savage  
**By invitation:** Peter Howe  
**In attendance:** Carol Palfrey (Administrator)

#### **1 Apologies**

Apologies were received from David Capp, Peter Horsefield, Mark Wells and Jill Wickens

#### **2 Presentation by Adrian Vernon (Chief Ranger, BA)**

Adrian Vernon had been invited to the meeting in lieu of Trudi Wakelin who was unable to attend. He provided an update on the handover and management of Breydon Water using two Power Point presentations. The first of these illustrated the problems identified during 2012 and the second described progress during the winter of 2012/13. The presentations also included details of the management of operations.

On a more general note, and at Trudi Wakelin's request, Adrian gave an update on the management of water ski-ing, swing bridges and the recent Broads Safety Audit.

He concluded by issuing an open invitation to members of the Committee to accompany the Rangers on one of their routine patrols of Breydon.

The Chairman thanked Adrian for coming and he left the meeting.

Reflecting on what they had been told, Committee members expressed concern that the Authority had felt it necessary to purchase a new patrol boat. Paul Savage intended to write to the Broads Authority about the need for moorings on the lower Bure for safety reasons to allow boat users to await the slack tide before crossing Breydon.

#### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

#### **4 Minutes of the Meeting of 12 March and Notes on the Meeting with Rob Rogers (BA)**

The minutes and notes, having been circulated, were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **5 Matters Arising**

- 4.1 Archive Film for AGM (Minute 14.1)  
David Stannard, retired college lecturer, local historian and co-ordinator of the Raging Sea Project, had agreed to give a presentation entitled: "The Raging Sea: The Floods Remembered".

## 6 Finance

### 6.1 Financial Statement – Year ending 31 March 2013

The Treasurer, Richard Reid, circulated a summary showing income and expenditure and drew attention to the in-year deficit of £3,197. Although the Society had reserves, this rate of annual deficit was not sustainable. The obvious remedy was recruitment of new members and Richard believed this must be a priority.

He drew attention to the following:

- three quarters of the Society's expenditure related to fixed costs;
- donations in 2011/2012 were the result of the one-off appeal to Life Members;
- raising the subscription rate had resulted in increased subscription income;
- net profit from the sale of Christmas cards had increased;
- the cost of the AGM had gone down.

Members discussed the problem of membership decline which, as Peter Howe pointed out, was not unique to the Broads Society. It was agreed that the Society needed to be able to demonstrate its purpose and activities if it was to attract new members. Colin Dye expressed disappointment that the membership had voted against a change of name as he believed the word "Society" was off-putting.

Keith Bacon suggested that some effort should be put into encouraging legacies.

Visitors to the Society's stand had asked about social events and talks; these had been features of the Societies activities in the past but in recent years members had failed to support events and the social programme had therefore been discontinued.

It was hoped that the photographic competition, open to all, might attract new members.

The Administrator pointed out that in 2013/14 there would be savings on telephone and mailing costs.

Members once again queried the cost of the independent examination of the accounts.

### 6.2 Report of the Finance Committee

The newly constituted Finance Sub-Committee had met on 8 May. The business had included review of the financial statement and preparation for this evening's meeting.

### 6.3 Administrator's Remuneration

The Administrator left the room while this was discussed. It was agreed that, in addition to the contractual increase, an additional payment should be made to take account of the financial duties she had taken on to support the Treasurer.

### 6.4 500 Club

New Trustees had been appointed in accordance with the Rules: Jill Wickens and Nick Balls (members of the Main Committee) and Wendy Bear (Society member). The Society Treasurer would act as Independent Examiner and would not therefore be a Trustee. At their first meeting the Trustees had made some amendments to the Rules of the Club.

### 6.5 Other Financial Matters

The Treasurer and Administrator had arranged to meet the Independent Examiner, Stefanie Smith of Lovewell Blake.

## 7 **CNP**

Peter Howe reported on the issues raised at the Council meeting on 18 April.

### 7.1 CNP Finances

Action to address financial problems showed signs of success and the deficit at the end of 2012/13 had been limited to under £2k. It remained to see whether this trend would continue.

The Administrator asked Peter to make enquiries about audit/examination fees paid by CNP and other National Park Societies.

### 7.2 Planning Assistance

CNP had prepared a paper setting out the circumstances in which they could provide help with planning issues. The criteria are:

- planning applications which might set a precedent
- applications where opposition had a good chance of success
- instances where the cost of providing assistance acceptable and justifiable
- applications on which CNP could provide a unique input

Peter undertook to circulate a copy of the CNP paper.

### 7.3 Relationship between Societies and CNP

In future the capitation fee will be based on the number of Society members (excluding life members). This will significantly reduce the cost of membership to the Society.

Robin Godber reported that, at a recent CNP meeting, other Society representatives had been impressed by the fact that the Society was a consultee on all planning applications submitted to Broads Authority.

It was agreed that the relationship with CNP should be highlighted on the Society's display boards.

## **8 Broads Charitable Trust**

It was agreed that this item should in future always follow the CNP on the agenda to enable Peter Howe to report.

The “Love the Broads” scheme was progressing well and full details would shortly be posted on the Trust’s website. The report on governance arrangements for managing the charitable funds, requested by Peter Horsefield, would be available for the next meeting.

## **9 Harnser**

The Administrator reported on the recent meetings of Rivers Committees when she had asked how many members had completed the survey on the website. Few members had picked up the reference to the website landscape survey in the April issue of Harnser. Members had also overlooked the letter from David Hastings drawing attention to the likely re-emergence of the “Norfolk Hub” development at Rackheath. The Administrator had subsequently had a useful meeting with Jill Wickens and Nick Balls to discuss ways in which the link between Harnser and the website could be strengthened and to consider improvements to the format of Harnser which might draw readers’ attention to important issues. Some of the new ideas would be used in the preparation of the next issue.

On behalf of Jill Wickens the Administrator asked Committee members to read the July edition of Harnser before the next meeting and to come prepared to offer comments.

## **10 Website**

Nick Balls circulated copies of the survey responses so far received.

It was agreed that action was required to encourage members to visit the website more frequently. Initially members needed to be alerted to the fact that the site had been completely redesigned. To retain interest, breaking news and new issues needed to be highlighted. Paul Savage suggested including a facility on the site whereby members could opt in to receiving regular email updates.

The Chairman was willing to start a blog to see if this might improve communication with members.

Although there was some enthusiasm for regenerating the Forum, it was noted that other Forums such as the Toll Payers Forum and “Broadly Speaking” had ceased operation. It was noted that the Society came top of the list on a Google search for “Friends of the Broads” which was encouraging.

## **11 Issues of Concern**

It was agreed that the list of items previously identified would be retained on the agenda and updates provided at each meeting as appropriate.

11.1 Pylons - Lowestoft to Norwich - ongoing

11.2 Solar Farm Development

Although the application at Belaugh had been refused, it was agreed that a watching brief should be kept for further proposals.

11.3 Pegasus Site Development

David Capp had represented the Society at the Broads Authority Planning Committee when this application had been considered. His report had been circulated with the meeting papers. The Authority had approved the development but had recorded grave concern over the future traffic problems which would inevitably arise. This was one of the major concerns which the Society had highlighted in its response to the planning consultation.

11.4 Water Ski-ing on Breydon Water - management plan being trialled

11.5 Tolls and Breydon Contract - update provided in presentation by Adrian Vernon

11.6 River Chet

Work on Hardley Weir was nearing completion. This would enable dredging to be carried out. The Society had received an email from a member drawing attention of navigation problems due to low water levels on the Chet. The Chairman had been to see him and suggested that he attend the next meeting of the Southern Rivers Sub-Committee with a view to his becoming a member.

11.7 Water Quality

A meeting of the Water Quality Sub-Committee had been held during the morning. Discussion had focussed on Hickling Broad. As a result of Martin George's representations, the Broads Authority had agreed to divert funds from Hoveton Great Broad to Hickling.

11.8 Climate Change Adaptation

The Chairman had discussed this issue at his regular meeting with John Packman. The plan was now out for consultation.

11.9 Other Issues

The government spending round for National Parks would be reviewed within the next week. It was noted that John Packman is currently the Chair of the Association of National Parks Authorities.

**12 Publicity and Promotion**

### 12.1 Norfolk Show

The Society had been allocated a large site in a central position (Stand 246, Avenue 9). A member, who preferred to remain anonymous, had offered to make a donation to cover the cost. Volunteers to man the stand would be welcomed.

### 12.2 General Promotion

The Society had mounted its stand at the Horning Boat Show and recruited two new members. The next event was the Green Boat Show at Salhouse Broad on 19 May. The Society would also have a presence at the Loddon Festival.

500 new membership leaflets had been printed

### 12.3 Anglia Afloat

Richard Reid's first article, using the Society's strapline, had been published and the copy accepted for June. It was agreed that future articles would promote the website and the drive to recruit new members.

## 13 **Rivers Sub-Committees**

### 13.1 Northern Rivers Sub-Committee (NRS-C)

The minutes of the meeting of 18 April had been circulated. Paul Savage reported the difficulty of obtaining copies of consultation document on the Mooring and Access Strategy promised by Adrian Clarke. An objection had been lodged to an application to replace the wind pumps at Somerton with two larger structures.

NRS-C members had reviewed the focus of their activities and had arranged a boat trip to survey one stretch of the Broads river network.

Ian Masters drew attention to an array of solar panels installed on front lawn of a waterside property at Horning and wondered if planning permission should have been sought.

### 13.2 Southern Rivers Sub-Committee (SRS-C)

The minutes of the meeting of 24 April had been circulated. Reporting on progress with the project to regenerate the Southern Broads, Colin Dye drew attention to the useful link established with Norwich River Parkway, the feature in the Broadcaster and promotion of the River Chet in the Loddon Directory.

The Committee was making enquiries about a proposal to introduce charging for mooring at Reedham Quay.

Responsibility for planning applications at Cantley and Reedham had been transferred to SRS-C.

## 14 **A.O.B**

There was no other business.

## 15 **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 9 July 2013

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

Signed .....  
Chairman

Date .....