

BROADS SOCIETY

Minutes of the Main Committee held on Tuesday 6 November 2012 at the Hotel Wroxham, Wroxham

Present: Keith Bacon (Chairman), Nick Barne, Nick Balls,
Robin Godber, Ian Masters, Mark Wells, Paul Savage and
Jill Wickens

By invitation: Bryan Read (President)
Patricia Page (nominee for election at Treasurer)

In attendance: Carol Palfrey (Administrator)

Prior to the main business the Committee received an update on Broads Authority activities from Trudi Wakelin which is recorded in a separate note.

1 Apologies and Welcome

Apologies were received from Colin Dye and David Capp and from Peter Howe, who had been invited to give a report on CNP.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3 Minutes of the Meeting of 18 September and Notes on the Meeting with Trudi Wakelin on 18 September 2012

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

4 Matters Arising

There were matters arising.

5 Campaign for National Parks

In Peter Howe's absence Bryan Read reported that new staff had been appointed and appeared to be tackling the problems reported previously. Bryan believed that they would be an effective team and, although there still some financial difficulties, CNP was now back on course.

As Society membership numbers were likely to decline further before the end of the financial year, Bryan had advised CNP to issue a pro forma invoice based on estimated lower membership numbers.

Keith Bacon wondered if other National Park Societies were experiencing a similar decline in membership numbers and what impact this might have on capitation fees paid to CNP. Bryan did not believe that other Societies were suffering significant membership loss but, as CNP relied on subscriptions for no more than 10% of its income, any reduction would not be too serious a concern.

6 Finance

6.1 Update from Administrator

The Administrator was continuing payment of cheques and financial record keeping as agreed. She had arranged a meeting with Stephanie Smith (Lovewell Blake) on 7 November to discuss accounting practices and to collect the background papers used to prepare the accounts. She and the Treasurer designate would then spend some time together to arrange the handover.

Nick Barne thanked the Administrator for taking on this extra work, a sentiment endorsed by Committee members.

6.2 Annual Accounts 2011/2012

Bryan Read offered to present the accounts at the AGM and answer questions as far as he was able. He drew attention to the increase in printing/advertising and postage/telephone in the 2012 compared to 2011 which could only be fully explained by reference to the background papers (see minute 6.1 above). He also pointed out that the end of year balance included the grant from SDF, none of which had been spent in 2011/2012, and one-off donations from Life Members.

6.3 Other financial issues

Projections prepared by Chris Pulley in 2011 had indicated that, without an increase in subscriptions, the Society's funds would be in deficit by 2016, hence the need for the increase this year. A financial projection for 2013 based on estimated membership numbers had been circulated, using the increased subscription level. Due to the reduced membership, the figures still showed a small deficit for 2013.

Committee members recognised that the Society was facing financial problems. Although savings might be possible, the solution was to find ways of increasing income in addition to recruiting new members and hopefully persuading some who had resigned to reconsider their decision.

7 AGM – Saturday 17 November

7.1 PA Facilities

The Administrator confirmed that she had made the necessary arrangements.

7.2 Nominations for election

Chairman - Robin Godber

Vice-Chairman – Keith Bacon
Immediate Past Chairman – Nick Barne
Treasurer – Patricia Page
Members: Nick Balls; David Capp; Colin Dye; Ian Masters;
Richard Reid; Mark Wells. (2 vacancies)
Jill Wickens – Editor of Harnser
Chairs of North and South Rivers Committees

7.3 Lunch Bookings

The Administrator reported that 43 bookings had been received which was significantly fewer than in previous years. *[Subsequent to the meeting an additional 10 late bookings were received and How Hill had indicated that 55 was the maximum number for which they could cater.]*

8 Broads Forum

There had been no meeting since 19 July. The next meeting was on 22 November. Bryan Read had attended a presentation and workshop about communication and had taken part in a telephone consultation about the way in which the Forum should operate. Discussions on this issue were ongoing. Keith Bacon added that, in addition to reviewing the Broads Forum, the Broads Authority was considering the future of all its committees.

The Authority had undertaken a telephone consultation on the Climate Adaptation Plan and had planned to hold a meeting/workshop. However, there was insufficient support to proceed with the event. Bryan Read believed that the Society could play a major role in this area by taking the initiative and convening a public meeting. Committee members supported this proposal, pointing out that it would be good way to attract new members.

9 Rivers Sub-Committees

9.1 Northern Rivers Sub-Committee (NRS-C)

The minutes of the meeting of 15 October had been circulated. Paul Savage drew attention to the Sub-Committee's meeting with Steve Birtles reported in the minutes.

9.2 Southern Rivers Sub-Committee (SRS-C)

The minutes of the meeting of 10 October had been circulated. Robin Godber highlighted the redevelopment of the Pegasus Site at Oulton Broad, the project to revitalise and promote the Southern Broads and other issues detailed in the minutes. He had made a presentation to Broads Tourism on the Revitalisation initiative which had been well received.

Paul Savage pointed out that one of the main deterrents to visitors entering the Southern Broads was a lack of mooring places where

vessels could await the tide to cross Breydon Water. The NRS-C had invited Adrian Clarke (BA) to their next meeting to talk about the Mooring and Access Strategy. Robin Godber explained that one aspect of the Revitalisation Project was to attract visitors travelling to the Broads by sea and encouraging them to visit Norwich. Mark Wells believed that the lack of safe mooring spaces was a major obstacle to any attempt to persuade visitors to travel to Norwich by water.

9.3 Chair of SRS-C

Plans were in hand to identify of a candidate to take on the Chairmanship of SRSC when Robin became Society Chairman.

10 Harnser

Jill Wickens asked for submission of copy for the January issue, including the list of 500 Club winner for 2012 and a report on the AGM, by no later than 21 November. Cavalier Mailing would require the mailing list by 12 December.

11 Publicity and Promotion

11.1 Advertising, Displays and Events

The publicity team had placed orders for adverts for 2013 and had taken steps to ensure that the advert appearing in the Broadcaster was of better quality than in 2012. They had also drawn up a list of events at which they would be exhibiting which included the Boating Bric-a-Brac sale at the Museum of the Broads. During the winter, the display boards would be refurbished and new leaflets printed. This would require modest expenditure.

11.2 Film Project

The films were now available on line at on the Sea Me TV website. It was agreed that the easiest way to make the films accessible via the Society's website was to set up a link to Sea Me. Mark Wells would provide the web address. It was agreed that the publicity team should give some thought to ways in which the films might be used to promote the Society.

Robin Godber congratulated all concerned with the film project, a sentiment endorsed by the Committee.

12 Broads Charitable Trust

Nick Barne reported the appointment of two new Trustees, one Trustee having stood down. The Trust was seeking funding through the Rural Development Plan for England and had submitted an application. If successful, the Trust would receive a significant sum of money.

Seven companies had been involved in the pilot for the Visitor Pay-Back Scheme, generating £2,000 in less than 12 months. The aim next year was to increase the number of participating organisations to 25 and income in the region of £20k.

The Trust had established a Panel of selected Trustees to review project proposals and make recommendations to the full board.

Bryan Read and Peter Howe had given a presentation to the Broads Authority which had been well received and would give a repeat performance to the Broads Forum on 22 November. It was agreed that it would be useful if they could give a presentation to the Committee.

13 Website

Nick Balls was continuing to develop the website. As a result of suggestions received, he planned to introduce a “breaking news” flash on the front page which could be used, for example, to announce that Broadsword had started its seasonal work.

The Committee discussed the future of the website Forum, which was very little used. Mark Wells suggested that, with increased use of social networking media such as Facebook and Twitter, Forums were becoming out of date. A new innovation now available was provision of comment boxes enabling users to comment on stories appearing on the website. Bryan Read believed that the Society should close the current Forum and start afresh.

14 A.O.B

14.1 How Hill Trustees

It was noted that Peter Horsefield had been appointed a Trustee in his own right. Keith Bacon was the Trustee representing the Society.

14.2 Annual Broads Awards

The Administrator had been contacted by norfolkbroads.org asking if the Society would be interested in sponsoring one of the

Annual Awards. It was agreed that this was not an appropriate use of Society funds.

14 Date of Next Meeting

Meeting dates for 2013 to be arranged after the AGM.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.20 pm

Signed
Chairman

Date