

BROADS SOCIETY

Minutes of the Main Committee held Tuesday 27 September 2011 at the Hotel Wroxham, Wroxham

Present: Keith Bacon (Vice-Chairman)
Chris Pulley (Treasurer), Nick Barne, Nick Balls, Lesley Bonshor,
Colin Dye, Liz Goodyear, Ian Masters, Jill Wickens and
Bryan Read (President)

In attendance: Carol Palfrey (Administrator)

In the absence of the Chairman, Keith Bacon (Vice-Chairman) took the chair.

1 Apologies for absence

Peter Horsefield (Chairman), David Capp, Richard Starling and Mark Wells.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3 Minutes of the Meeting of 26 July 2011

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

4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

5 Finance

5.1 Receipts and Payments Account to 31 August 2011

The Treasurer had circulated a summary of receipts and payments for the first five months of the financial year showing comparative figures for the previous year and movements since the last report. Income during the last two months included donation of £1,250 from the 500 Club and the subscription receipts for July, the month when a large proportion of the membership paid by standing order.

5.2 Accounts for the year to 31 March 2011

The Treasurer presented the final draft for approval together with a copy of the abbreviated version prepared for publication in the AGM supplement distributed to members with "Harnser". It was proposed by Nick Barne, seconded by Ian Masters, and unanimously agreed, that the accounts be approved. In the absence of the Society Chairman the accounts were signed by Keith Bacon (Vice-Chairman) and Nick Barne (Immediate Past Chairman.)

5.3 Nomination of New Treasurer

Paul Weeks had provided a brief pen portrait. Nick Barne said that he had known Paul for some time and was confident that his experience

would make him a very suitable candidate for the position of Treasurer. Ian Masters congratulated Nick and the Nominations Committee for finding someone willing to take on the role.

It was agreed that Nick would write to Paul to let him know the outcome of the meeting. The Administrator would follow this up with a nomination form, a membership application form, a copy of the latest issue of "Harnser" and the AGM supplement.

5.4 Report of the Finance Committee

Notes on the Finance Committee meeting held on 5 September had been circulated. The Finance Committee had considered a 5 year financial projection prepared by Chris Pulley which showed that the Society would have negative reserves by 2015 if there was no increase in the subscription rates. No other income stream or cost savings could be identified. Comparison with subscription rates of other National Park Societies had shown that the Broads Society were significantly lower.

The recommendation of the Finance Committee was that subscription rates should be raised as follows with effect from 1 April 2012:

Single membership paid by standing order:	£16 (currently £10)
Single membership paid by cheque:	£19 (currently £12)
Joint membership paid by standing order:	£22 (currently £13)
Joint membership paid by cheque:	£25 (currently £15)
Life membership under 60:	£375 (currently £250)
Life membership over 60:	£250 (currently £150)

The Finance Committee recognised that there would be a potential loss of members and had provided for a 10% reduction in their revised financial projections which had been circulated to the Main Committee.

The Administrator pointed out that there the cost of changing standing orders would be in the region of £600.

It was noted that, under the Society rules, the Main Committee had the power to determine subscription rates though any proposed changes would need to be reported and explained to members at an Annual General Meeting.

After discussion, it was proposed by Keith Bacon, seconded by Colin Dye, and unanimously agreed, that the recommendations of the Finance Committee be adopted.

The following actions were agreed:

- The decision to be reported and explained to members at the forthcoming AGM.
- Copies of the financial projection to be made available to any members requesting further details.

- The topic of the Chairman's letter in the January edition of "Harnser" to be the proposed rise in subscription rates and the reasons for it.
- The letter to advise members to take no action to amend standing orders as they would be receiving a letter from the Administrator explaining the procedures.
- The letter to be checked by the Finance Committee and the Administrator before publication.
- Investigations to be made into the possibility of introducing payment by direct debit. Bryan Read offered to make initial enquiries.
- Subscriptions rates to be reviewed annually.

It was further agreed that, in due course, a letter should be sent to those longstanding Life Members who did not currently make a regular donation inviting them to make an additional contribution to funds.

Nick Barne thanked the Treasurer and the Finance Committee for their work on this issue.

6 AGM 2011

6.1 Nominations for election

Liz Goodyear informed the meeting that, after careful thought, she had decided not stand for re-election because of her other commitments. However, she was willing to continue managing the website as this could be done remotely without the need to travel to meetings. Members thanked Liz for her service and for continuing to look after the website.

With the exception of the Treasurer, who had already notified his intention to step down, all other members were willing to continue as committee members. Those present who needed to be re-elected completed nomination forms. The Administrator would await completed forms from, Richard Starling, Mark Wells and David Capp and would send a partially completed form to Peter Horsefield for signature.

It was agreed that the Nominations Committee should meet to consider succession planning for new Committee Members and a new Chairman to take over when Peter Horsefield's term of office came to and end in 2012.

Nick Balls said that visitors to the publicity stand often asked how they could get involved.

6.2 Arrangements for AGM

It was agreed that the Boards should be on display. Ian Masters offered to accompany the Administrator when she visited the Norfolk Broads Yacht Club to sort out final arrangements.

7 Website

Liz Goodyear invited members to give their views on what they saw as the most important functions of the website. Suggestions included recruitment, information for existing members and news about topical issues affecting the Broads. The inclusion of photographs was considered very important. It was also suggested that a link to news stories reported in the EDP could be included.

Liz had carried out an analysis of visits to the site but this was inconclusive as it did not identify multiple visits by a single individual.

There was general agreement that the website was insufficiently outward looking, giving the impression that the Society was interested only in its own internal functioning. Colin Dye suggested that the name of the Society was “Victorian” and did little for its image in today’s world.

It was agreed that the Society should investigate obtaining professional help to redesign the website. Nick Barne informed members that the NSBCT website had been designed at modest cost. Liz Goodyear undertook to contact the designer.

It was confirmed that the Members’ Forum was part of the website, sitting alongside it.

8 Publicity & Promotion

8.1 Report

Jill Wickens and Nick Balls had attended 7 publicity events, including a two-day event at the Forum. They requested more support from the committee members. For 2012, they intended to do more advance planning by compiling a list of all the forthcoming Broads related events.

8.2 Film Project

Ian Masters reported that the project had started and that filming would begin in February.

8.3 Social Programme

Bryan Read believed that the loss of a social programme was a matter of regret. The Broads Authority would be consulting on a Climate Adaptation Plan for the Broads and he believed this presented an ideal opportunity for the Society to get involved by organising a large public meeting. It would have the twin benefits of promoting the Society and strengthening its relationship with the Broads Authority.

8.4 Advertising

The Administrator reported that, after consultation, the Publicity and Promotion Group had agreed to take on responsibility for placing advertisements in the Green Book, Broadcaster, etc. This would ensure consistency of design in all promotional material.

9 NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK BROADS CHARITABLE TRUST

Nick Barne gave an update on potential projects for funding.

10 CNP

A report on CNP, including the Annual Conference would be given at the next meeting.

It was agreed that it was important to retain the principle of paying the expenses of the CNP representative, leaving it to the discretion of the office holder to claim.

11 Planning

11.1 North Rivers Sub-Committee

The minutes of the meeting of 8 August had been circulated.

11.2 South Rivers Sub-Committee

The Southern Rivers Sub-Committee had not met in August.

11.3 National Planning Policy Framework

A small working group comprising members of both sub-committees had met to consider the Society's response to the Government's consultation on the proposed changes to the planning system. Keith Bacon was preparing the draft response for comment by the working group.

The aim of the proposals was to change the emphasis in favour of development. However, National Parks and designated Areas of Natural Beauty were excluded and Cally Smith (BA) therefore considered that the consultation was not directly relevant to the Broads. Nonetheless, the Society felt it important to comment because development in areas immediately adjacent to the Broads Executive Area would inevitably have an impact.

It was agreed that the draft response should be circulated to the Main Committee as well as to members of the Sub-Committees.

11.4 Future of Sub-Committees

It was agreed that a discussion should be included as an agenda item at the next Main Committee meeting.

12 Harnser

Publication in the re-styled format notified at the last meeting would be deferred until the April issue.

13 A.O.B.

13.1 How Hill

Keith Bacon reported that Simon Partridge had been appointed as manager of How Hill following David Holmes's retirement.

13.2 Somerleyton Bridge

Liz Goodyear drew attention to the recent closure. Colin Dye informed members that Chris Groves had contacted the Broads Authority to remind them that they had bought a set of summer rails for use by Network Rail. They were stored nearby but had not been installed this year. It was agreed that the Society should send a reminder to the BA early next year so that they could ensure that Network Rail changed the rails before the hot weather.

16 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 8 November 2011

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Signed
Chairman

Date