

BROADS SOCIETY

Minutes of the Main Committee held on Thursday 16 September 2010 at Broad House Hotel, Wroxham

Present: Peter Horsefield (Chairman), Keith Bacon (Vice-Chairman) Nick Barne, Chris Pulley (Treasurer), Richard Baguley, Nick Balls, David Capp, Colin Dye, Paul Howes, Richard Starling, Jill Wickens and Liz Goodyear via a Skype connection.

In attendance: Carol Palfrey (Administrator)

The Vice-Chairman took the chair pending the late arrival of the Chairman.

1 Apologies for absence

Lesley Bonshor, Ian Masters and Peter Waller

2 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3 Minutes of the Meeting of 16 July 2010

The minutes, having been circulated, were agreed and signed by the Vice-Chairman as a true record.

4 Matters Arising

4.1 BA Landscape Project (Minute 8.1)

The meeting with Lesley Marsden had not been formally minuted. Committee members were referred to minute 6 of the Meeting of the Northern Rivers Sub-Committee for the brief summary given by the Chairman. There was nothing further to report.

4.2 Role of the Broads Society (Minute 6.2)

David Capp apologised that he had not prepared the promised feature "Working on our Behalf" in time to meet the deadline for the October issue of "Harnser". He would submit an article in good time for the January 2011 issue.

Peter Horsefield assumed the Chair at this point.

5 Finance

5.1 Accounts for the Year to 31 March 2010

The Treasurer had circulated the final draft accounts, approved by the external examiner, for approval by the full Committee. There were no questions and it was therefore proposed by Nick Barne, seconded by Richard Baguley, and unanimously agreed that they accounts be accepted. Subject to an amendment to the name of the Vice-Chairman, the accounts were signed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

The Treasurer had also provided a copy of the abbreviated version for inclusion in the AGM booklet to be circulated with "Harnser".

The Chairman thanked Chris Pulley for preparing an excellent set of accounts which were also easy to understand. The Committee endorsed this sentiment and Jill Wickens expressed her personal thanks to Chris for the way in which he had prepared the abbreviated version for the AGM booklet.

5.2 Receipts and Payments Account to 31 August 2010

This had been circulated with the Treasurer's monthly report which pointed out that the increased income past two months resulted from a donation of £1500 from the 500 Club and the July subscription income which was always significantly greater than in other months.

6 **Proposal for the Appointment of a "Project Officer"**

This item had been carried over from the previous meeting.

Peter Horsefield suggested that, if the bid for the proposed Landscape Heritage Project were successful, the Society could appoint a "Project Officer" to carry out the Society's contribution, in which case all costs would be covered.

Keith Bacon described the situation at Norfolk CPRE which employed three officers to take on finance, administration and project work respectively. He believed that it would be useful for the Society to employ someone who could deal with major planning issues, including consultations on Local Plans and development control. The person could also represent the Society at BA Planning meetings.

The Treasurer reported that, although the Society had financial reserves, the President had expressed concern that it was now running a year on year deficit of approximately £5,000.

There was general agreement that an appointment should be considered only if a need had been identified. Some members felt that, at present, there was no such need [but see Minute 9.2].

Peter Horsefield proposed that a sub-group be established to consider the options. It was agreed that the members of the group should be Keith Bacon, the Administrator, Paul Howes, Ian Masters and Jill Wickens. The Administrator was asked to set up a meeting as soon as possible.

7 **CNP**

The Chairman and Paul Howes had represented the Society at the recent CNP Societies Conference organised by the Peaks Society in Derbyshire. They reported that it had been an excellent meeting, including a range of walks and visits to places of interest. Paul had been interested to learn that there were parallels with other Societies and their relationship with Park Authorities. He had made the suggestion that Authorities should become Trusts with Board members acting as Trustees, an idea considered very interesting by Lord Judd. Paul had written to Lord Judd asking him to follow this up.

It was noted that CNP were introducing a new scheme called "National Park Heroes" to recognise volunteers who had made substantial contribution to the wellbeing of their National Park. There was general agreement that the Broads Society should consider making a nomination.

Item 8 was of a confidential matter.

9 **Publicity and Promotion**

9.1 Event at Hoveton Riverside Park

Richard Baguley reported that this been a worthwhile day. He had helped to run the stand with Jill Wickens, Nick Balls, Paul Howes, Liz Goddard and Ian Masters. Members thanked Nick and Jill for their work to re-vamp the display boards which were excellent.

Jill expressed her wish to mount a display at the Green Boat Show using the new boards and asked members to contact her if they would be willing to

assist. The Administrator offered to provide contact details of volunteers who had helped with the Royal Show.

- 9.2 Report from Publicity & Promotion Group (P&PG)
In Ian Masters' absence, this item was introduced by Richard Baguley. The P&PG Group had met and Ian Masters had expressed the view that strengthening contacts with journalists and the media was not the best way to promote the Society. The group had explored a number of ideas before deciding that some kind of highly visible project might bring more attention. This turned on a comment from Ian about an initiative with which he had been involved and, out of much discussion and input from the entire group, an embryonic proposal to develop a young people's film making project was agreed. In a briefing note to the Committee, Ian had stated that the aim was to introduce the natural resource of the Norfolk Broads to a teenage audience that had either never experienced it or had taken it for granted. Working in collaboration with Norfolk Schools, five teams of young people from Norfolk Schools would be taken to explore areas of exceptional natural beauty and then given training to produce five short films to be screened at a premiere event at the Riverside Odeon Norwich.

There was unanimous support for this initiative from Committee member and Richard Baguley suggested that there might be a role for a "Project Officer". The P&PG would be holding another meeting in the near future.

10 Fund Raising

Paul Howes had been inspired by a presentation on fund raising at the CNP Societies Conference and had circulated a copy. He pointed out that without funding to carry out its aims the Society risked becoming moribund. The following ideas have been mooted and he offered them for consideration:

- Introducing a "Broads pound" in the form of a £1 voluntary tax to hotel bills. (Note – BA were already considering a scheme via the Broads Tourism Forum).
- Having a presence at village fetes and other events. (Note – other Park Societies have free accommodation at their local agricultural shows)
- Issuing questionnaires to lapsed members enquiring why they are leaving. (The Administrator pointed out difficulties).
- Introducing direct debit to simplify the introduction of rises in subscription rates. (Richard Baguley to check his assertion that the Society's income was below banks' permitted threshold for direct debit).
- Selling Society regalia. (This had been tried in the past but demand had reduced to a trickle).

It was agreed that fund raising was important and the Chairman proposed that ideas for fund raising should be added to the remit of the P&PG with Paul Howes attending for one meeting only.

11 Planning

- 11.1 North Rivers Sub-Committee
The minutes of the meeting of 16 August had been circulated. Richard Baguley had discussed with John Pitchers problems he had raised in connection with the website (Minute 4.3).
- 11.2 South Rivers Sub-Committee
The Sub-Committee does not meet in August

12 AGM 2010

Nomination forms were circulated for completion and return to the Administrator. Richard Baguley was ineligible to stand for election, having completed six years as a Committee member. Paul Howes would be standing down as he was moving to the USA. All other members were willing to put themselves forward for re-election. This left two vacancies.

13 Lady Mayhew Trophy

Jill Wickens had submitted a nomination form on behalf of Birkenhead YMCA. This was unanimously agreed. The Administrator would write to Nigel Hughes inviting him and a YMCA member to the AGM.

14 Harnser

Jill Wickens had received a letter from a member of the RSPB responding to the Chairman's letter in the July issue. She had undertaken to publish the letter if the individual concerned joined the Society.

It was noted that the publication deadline was the first day of the month preceding the month of publication.

The Chairman announced that his regular letter would deal with the problem of effluent leaking from septic tanks. He had been horrified to learn that this accounted for 87% of the pollution in the River Ant.

15 Social Events

Jill Wickens intended to distribute flyers at the AGM as she had done in the past. She proposed holding the Annual Service at a church in the South Rivers.

16 Norfolk & Suffolk Broads Charitable Trust

Nick Barne reported that the Trustees had decided on a logo which he would bring to the next meeting. He had written an article for "Harnser" appealing for ideas for future projects. The outcome of the grant application to fund the project at Geldeston Lock was awaited.

17 Broads Forum

Richard Starling reported.

The meeting held on 22 July had been followed by a members only meeting. Members had expressed dissatisfaction with the way the Forum was run, particularly the fact that items they proposed for discussion were omitted from the agenda. For example, Richard's request for discussions on the problems caused by geese and the use of the fen harvester had been ignored. However, after he had submitted a Freedom of Information request, these items had appeared on the agenda.

The next meeting would be considering the Authority's proposals to address the 5% spending cut. Richard was concerned that the aquatic plants survey should not be scrapped.

Paul Howes pointed out that some local authorities were publishing details of every item of expenditure exceeding £500. This was likely to become national policy and he suggested that the Broads Authority should be an early adopter.

The report of the Water Ski-ing and Wakeboarding Panel would be discussed at the next meeting.

Richard believed that changes were afoot and that future meetings would be more interesting.

At the Forum, Keith Bacon had stated his objection to the style of the minutes which failed to attribute comments to named individuals.

18 Website

Richard Baguley reported that the server host switch had gone smoothly. In view of the length of the meeting he proposed that discussion of the other website issues listed on the agenda should be deferred to the next meeting.

19 A.O.B.

19.1 Seat at Irstead

The Administrator had been contacted by the Clerk of Barton and Irstead Parish Council in connection with the seat on Irstead Staithe which the Society had donated to the Parish Council in the 1970s. The seat was in need of maintenance and the Parish Council Chairman wished it to be removed.

This issue had been discussed at the beginning prior to the Chairman's arrival and in the presence of Trudi Wakelin. She said that the Broads Authority would be willing to consider the possibility of accommodating the seat on the 24 hour mooring on the other side of the plot. David Capp volunteered to contact Richard Farley (BA) to once the Administrator had informed the Parish Clerk of the proposal.

19.2 Meeting with the Broads Authority

Richard Baguley had already raised this issue via email. It was agreed to arrange a meeting. The Chairman would make the initial contact with the BA.

20 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 4 November at Broad House Hotel, Wroxham

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10.25 pm