

BROADS SOCIETY

Minutes of the Main Committee held on Tuesday 12 November 2013 at the Hotel Wroxham, Wroxham

Present: Robin Godber (Chairman); Keith Bacon (Vice-Chairman),
Nick Balls, David Capp, Colin Dye, Peter Horsefield, Ian Masters,
Richard Reid, Paul Savage, Mark Wells and Jill Wickens

By invitation: Nick Barne (President)
In attendance: Carol Palfrey (Administrator)

1 Apologies

Peter Howe (Society CNP representative)

2 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3 Minutes of the Meeting of 10 September 2013

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

4 Matters Arising

4.1 Recruitment (Minute 4.3)

At the last meeting it had been suggested that members should identify people whom they believed might become members if invited to do so. No suggestions had been forthcoming. However, the Chairman declared his intention to include reference to recruitment in his report to the AGM and therefore proposed that further action on this recruitment initiative should be deferred for the time being.

5 Finance

5.1 Annual Accounts 2012/13

The Treasurer apologised for the error in the version of the accounts published for the AGM. This was merely a mistake in transcription and he was grateful to the member who had reported it. He would explain the anomaly at the AGM.

5.2 Finance Report to 31 October 2013

The report had been circulated. The Treasurer reported that little had changed since the previous report. The anticipated deficit was less than in 2012–2013 but this was not a sustainable state of affairs in the longer term. Savings had been made on telephone costs but identification of other reasons for the deficit reduction would require detailed analysis. The proposal to change the Independent Examiner

(to be considered as the next agenda item) would achieve significant savings in the current financial year. It was agreed to arrange a meeting of the Finance Committee to carry out a detailed appraisal of the accounts and to identify the potential for further savings. (See also Minute 11 re savings on production and distribution of “Harnser”).

5.2 Proposal for appointment of Independent Examiner for the year 2013–2014 onwards.

The Treasurer reported on the process to select an alternative Independent Examiner. Full details had been set out in the papers circulated to members. Both he and the Administrator had assessed and interviewed two candidates, both of whom were eminently suited to the task, and had selected Debit & Credit Accountancy Services of Wroxham as the most appropriate. The fee quoted was based on the understanding that the Administrator would continue to maintain the high quality record keeping demonstrated during the interviews.

The Treasurer had obtained assurance that the quotation was realistic and pointed out that significant savings would be achieved by approving this measure. He therefore proposed that a motion to appoint a new examiner be put to the AGM. This was seconded by Jill Wickens and unanimously agreed.

[The proposal was approved by the AGM on 23 November].

5.3 Legislation on Lobbying

The proposals had been robustly opposed by the House of Lords because of the unintended consequences for Charities. The government had therefore agreed to engage in a process of consultation before proceeding further.

5.4 Indemnity Insurance Renewal

It was proposed by Richard Reid, seconded by Peter Horsefield, and unanimously agreed, that the invitation to renew the insurance policy at a cost of £261.56 be accepted.

6 CNP

Peter How was unable to attend the meeting and Robin Godber provided a report.

6.1 Dualling of the Acle Straight

The main issue affecting the Society was the Government’s road building programme and resurrection of the proposal to dual the the Acle Straight. Robin would be able to provide further information after the forthcoming CNP Conference. In the meantime, members engaged in a preliminary discussion about the Society’s position.

When the proposal had last been raised, the Society had raised objections on conservation grounds. However, the matter was far from clear cut as there were two other competing factors to be taken into consideration: safety and the economic future of Gt Yarmouth.

Peter Horsefield drew an analogy with the Flood Protection Scheme. When this had initially been proposed there had been considerable concern about the impact on the Broads environment. However, through a carefully managed process of consultation of collaboration with interested parties, the contractors had managed to achieve their objectives to the benefit of the Broads and with minimal impact on the environment. In view of this experience, Peter proposed that the Society should consider changing its stance and adopt a more positive view of the proposals which would improve road safety and bring great benefit to Gt Yarmouth. He believed that the lessons learned from the Flood Protection Scheme could be adapted to manage the impact of dualling the Acle Straight.

6.2 Undergrounding of Power Cables

This issue would be discussed at the CNP Conference and Martin George had prepared a detailed paper. Nick Balls drew attention to a report in the EDP about proposals to import electricity via Bacton.

6.3 CNP Future Security

Peter Horsefield enquired whether the CNP had really recovered from the problems of recent years. It was noted that Peter Howe's reports had all been positive on this matter. The Chairman agreed to obtain assurance about this at the Conference.

6.4 CNP Conference 2014

The Chairman of CNP had asked whether the Broads Society could host the annual conference in 2014. The last Conference in the Broads, held in 2002, had been a great success. The Administrator had already expressed her concern to the Chairman about the proposal. She explained that an energetic and dedicated organising committee supported by a large number of Society members had been essential to organise the 2002 event. The Society did not currently have a have a similar a pool of potential volunteers.

Committee members agreed that the Society was not currently in a position to be able to organise a national conference.

7 Broads Charitable Trust

Nick Barne reported very encouraging progress. His optimism had been boosted that morning by receipt of a donation of £2,000. Twenty businesses had signed up to the full "Love the Broads Scheme" and another 42 were supporting the Trust via donation boxes and advertisements. Nick anticipated that the Charity would exceed its target for numbers of participants by the end of the year. He suggested that the Administrative Officer be invited to a future Committee meeting and this was agreed to be an excellent idea.

8 Chairman's Meeting with Vice-Presidents

Robin Godber been invited to meet the Vice-Presidents to discuss major issues in which the Society was engaged. The Vice Presidents

attending were: Sheila Ashford, Martin George, Keith McDougall and Vic Standley. The discussion included the following topics: Electricity Pylons, Acle Straight and Water Quality. Robin had reported on the way the Society was addressing these issues and had explained the new structure set up for this purpose. He had also given them information on the Society's active promotional activities.

A major issue which concerned the Vice-Presidents was the cessation of the ESA grazing scheme and the impact on areas of Broadland affected. Robin reported that the Broads Forum had discussed this issue in response to the request from the Broads Authority about its priorities for 2014. Peter Horsefield pointed out that this was an issue on which the Society could take a stance unreservedly on the side of conservation. Nick Balls suggested that a campaign for the continuance of the ESA Scheme would be useful publicity.

Robin had found the meeting with Vice-Presidents of great value and he was grateful for their interest and concern. The Vice-Presidents represented a wealth of experience and knowledge and it was good to have this resource on which he and the Society could draw.

9 Acle Straight

A copy of an email from CNP had been circulated with the meeting papers. The discussion is recorded under Minute 6.1 above.

10 AGM

10.1 Nominations for election

The following members would be standing for re-election
Chairman - Robin Godber
Treasurer - Richard Reid
Nick Balls, David Capp, Colin Dye, Ian Masters,
Richard Reid, Mark Wells

Peter Horsefield would continue as Immediate Past Chairman (ex officio) and Paul Savage would serve (ex officio) as Chair of the North Rivers Committee assuming he was willing to accept re-appointment to that role.

Keith Bacon, having served 6 years, was ineligible for re-election but was willing to serve as a co-opted member if requested.

Jill Wickens, as Editor of Harnser, was ex officio and did not require re-election.

10.2 Final Arrangements

79 lunches had been booked which was the maximum number How Hill could accommodate. It would not be possible for all members to eat lunch in the ballroom and some would need to use the sun room. It was agreed that members had an affection for How Hill and would not mind a small degree of over-crowding.

10.3 Photographic Competition

Jill Wickens reported that Nigel Hughes had recruited a judging panel and would set up the display of photos in the Boardman Room. He had funded the following prizes:
Overall winner – David Blair Trophy (to be retained for a year), a silver salver and cheque for £100
Class winners – a silver salver and £25 each
The YMCA would be paying for lunches for 6 judges.
The Administrator would direct members to the Boardman Room to view in the exhibition when they arrived.

10.4 General Assistance

Nick Balls offered to help as necessary. Sarah White had also offered her help.

11 Harnser

Although Jill Wickens had announced her intention to resign after the AGM in 2014, she said that she would be willing to continue if a replacement could not be found. She hoped, however, that every effort would be made to find a new editor as she felt the time had come for a re-vamp of the magazine and a fresh approach.

Jill had received an email from a life member suggesting ways in which the cost of producing and circulating “Harnser” could be minimised. She had provided a well-considered response which would be published in “Harnser” alongside the text of the email.

Members had a brief discussion on possible options for reducing costs including the offer of an electronic version of “Harnser” for those members who opted for this alternative. It was, however, agreed that further debate by the Committee without supporting data would be unproductive. It was therefore agreed that the Editorial Committee should convene a meeting with the Treasurer to discuss the potential for savings. The Administrator offered to provide information on postage costs, numbers etc as required.

12 Anglia Afloat

Richard Reid thanked members for their help in suggesting topics. He had received good feedback from his column in the November issue. He was planning to use the presentation of the Lady Mayhew trophy as the topic for an article in the next issue. Mark Wells pointed out that the winners of the Trophy, the Green Wyvern Yachting Club, were proposing to write an article for the same issue of Anglia Afloat. The Administrator offered to provide contact details for Richard so that he could check what the Yachting Club were planning. It was suggested that an alternative topic might be the Photographic Competition.

13 Website

Nick Balls reported that further improvement of the website was work in progress.

14 Issues of Concern

14.1 Pylons – Lowestoft to Norwich – await developments

- 14.2 Solar Farm Development
The Society had recently lodged an objection to a development at Salhouse.
- 14.3 Breydon Water – Ski-ing and management issues
Colin Dye confirmed that there was no official speed limit on Breydon and that boat users were expected to operate a duty of care.
Robin Godber would raise the issue at his next meeting with John Packman
- 14.4 River Chet
Work on Hardley Flood weir was complete but another board would improve matters further. The Broads Authority had brought forward their dredging programme for the stretch of river between Pyes Mill and Loddon Basin. Riparian owners had agreed to contribute to the cost. Spoil would be disposed of locally. Trials were under way to assess the effectiveness of pushing piles further down as an alternative to removal. John Cressey, a professional diver and Society member, had been monitoring these trials from under water. Once BESL had completed their work the whole of the River Chet would be dredged.
- Asked what influence the Society's had had in achieving this outcome, the Chairman explained that resolution had been achieved by the combined efforts on a number of organisations – Parish Council, the Loddon and Chedgrave Pressure Group and the Society with support from both the Hire Boat Federation and the NSBA.
- 14.5 Water Quality
Martin George was keeping up the pressure for improvement of water quality in Hickling Broad. The Chairman confirmed that he always included this issue in all his meetings with John Packman.
- Keith Bacon reported that the Upper Thurne Working Group, of which Martin George was a member, would be meeting on 14 November and would be discussing this matter.
- 14.6 Climate Change Adaptation
Simon Hooton, the BA Officer responsible for drafting the Authority's Climate Adaptation Plan, had asked for the Society's assistance and had suggested a series of articles in "Harnser". Peter Horsefield had therefore prepared an article for the January issue of "Harnser". In writing the article he had drawn on the latest report by the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and made the point that the report's findings, based on a wealth of research data, did not support the UK Government's projections for sea level rise and other environmental change. The Broads Authority had no option but to design a plan to meet Government requirements rather than addressing issues arising from the science. Peter

circulated copies of his article and invited members to let him have their comments.

There was a general agreement with Keith Bacon's view, that if the Government had set aside funds for adaptation to climate change, the Society should take the opportunity of lobbying strongly in support the erection of a Yare Barrier as the best way to protect Broadland.

14.7 Norfolk Hub

As previously agreed, the Society would rely on David Hastings to provide information on developments.

14.8 Government's Road Building Proposal – Acle Straight
See Minute 9

14.9 Pegasus Boatyard

Robin Godber had received an email from Ian and Penney Northover Smith (members who lived near to the site) about their recent meeting with the Project Manager, Ed Guildler. They had been given the following update:

- The building plan and number of houses was basically unchanged since the last submission
- Approval from the Broads Authority had not been given as the planning officer was still working on the 60 (approx.) conditions to be applied.
- The development of the land would be in three phases which would start early in the new year and would probably take a year to complete.
 - Concrete breaking and holding on site for future use
 - Contamination testing
 - Archaeology and sorting out of the quay headings
- The extremity of the building area to the Broad would be secured by a quay barrier, the outer reef being constructed from tyres to retain the reed bed up to the quay.
- Construction would start from the south, opposite Nicholas Everitt Park and work progressively towards the main road.
- No more than 37 houses would be built before work started on the boatyard.

Ed Guildler had offered to give a full presentation to the Society at an appropriate time and this was agreed.

15 **Publicity and Promotion**

Ian Masters reported on the Publicity Team's planning meeting. The Society would attend the following events in 2014: Green Fairhaven; Horning Boat Show; Picnic in the Park (venue TBA); Museum of the Broads Family Day; Yarmouth Maritime Festival; Fair on the Yare;

Wroxham Week (one day only); Salhouse Broad Heritage Event; Loddon Festival; Royal Norfolk Show.

David Capp believed that “Harnser” could be used to promote the Society by including a suggestion to members that, when they had finished reading, they should pass on their copy to a friend or leave it at their doctor’s surgery or other location where magazines were provided for those waiting for appointments.

16 Rivers Sub-Committees

16.1 Northern Rivers Sub-Committee (NRS-C)

The minutes of the meeting of 14 October had been circulated.

Cess Staithe (Minute 3.2)

Keith Bacon reported that the Martham Boat Company had been found guilty of adverse possession of the staithe.

16.2 Southern Rivers Sub-Committee (SRS-C)

Colin Dye and Robin Godber reported on the trip through Norwich up to New Mills with representatives of all those bodies interested in promoting Norwich. Colin said that the Hire Boat Federation had agreed that it was not appropriate for hire boats to travel up river from Bishop’s Bridge but would encourage visitors using hire boats to moor at the Yacht station and transfer to smaller craft to continue their journey through the centre of Norwich.

It was proposed, through the Broads Forum, to urge the Broads Authority to make revitalisation of the Southern Broads a priority. David Capp believed that this was an excellent example of the Society taking a positive initiative to be creative in working for the wellbeing of the Broads.

17 A.O.B

17.1 Broadsword

David Capp reported that three or four new members had joined Broadsword as a result of an item in “Harnser”. **Tour for Group of Farmers visiting the Broads on 2 October. The Group had asked to meet Keith in Neatishead. It was agreed that Keith should telephone them for more details about their requirements and offer a visit to How Hill if this was of interest.**

17.2 Arthur Ransome Society

The Chairman reported that the Arthur Ransome Society would be holding their annual conference in The Broads and had asked the Society if they could provide someone who would give a talk. It was agreed that taking up this invitation would provide an excellent opportunity for promoting the Society; several members of the Arthur Ransome Society were already Society members.

18 Dates of Meetings for 2014

Tuesdays: 21 January; 18 March; 13 May; 15 July; 9 September; 11 November. The AGM date had yet to be discussed but would be held on either 16 or 22 November.

[It is suggested that the AGM be held on 22 November to allow the sufficient time between the November Committee meeting and the AGM]

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.35 pm

Signed

Chairman

Date