

BROADS SOCIETY

Minutes of the Main Committee held on Tuesday 24 May 2016 at the Hotel Wroxham, Wroxham

Present: Robin Godber (Chairman); Keith Bacon, David Capp, Colin Dye, Anne Filgate, Richard Reid (Treasurer), Paul Rice, Jill Wickens, Peter Howe

1 **Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Peter Horsefield, Carol Palfrey, Paul Savage, Pat Simpson.

2 **Declaration of interests**

Keith Bacon Trustee of How Hill; Paul Rice Member of the BA and North Norfolk District Councillor

3 **Minutes of the Meeting of 22 March 2016**

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

4 **Matters Arising**

4.1 Eel Sett (Minute 4.1)

Nothing further had been heard. The Chairman would continue to raise the matter with John Packman, and would visit the site.

4.2 Royal Norfolk Show (Minute 4.2)

It had become clear that space in the "Broads Area" to be organised by the BA would be available free of charge. The Chairman felt that it would be advantageous for the Society to participate, and this was agreed. Individual attendance and logistics would be discussed nearer the time.

4.3 Broads Plan (Minute 4.3)

Further to previous discussions, members felt that the Society's response should include particular reference to :

- promotion of the Southern Rivers
- water quality, with particular reference to unauthorised discharges from private boats and liveaboards, with an objective to bring the level of regulation and enforcement up to that prevailing on the Thames (as per previous minute)
- the ongoing issue of refuse disposal sites.

5 **Finance**

1 Financial Report – year end 2015-2016

The Treasurer had circulated a report on the financial position at the end of the 2015-2016 year, subject to confirmation by the Examiner. This showed a reduction in the deficit for the year from £838 to £584. He reported that while measures had been taken to reduce costs, and the Society had ample cash reserves for the immediate future, it was likely that costs would increase over time

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and these reserves would be depleted. He had discussed his concerns with the Chairman, and informal discussions were planned before the next meeting, with a view to creating a sustainable cash flow forecast.

The income and expenditure for the CNP Conference up to the year end consisted of early bookings and deposits paid for accommodation. The Conference was still planned to break even.

Later in the meeting, Peter Howe commented that he had seen some financial data from other NP Societies. While some had substantial income and reserves, others were in a similar position to the Society.

Colin Dye asked why there was a deficit on the AGM. The Treasurer explained that while the cost of lunches was completely recovered from members, there was a charge for the facilities at How Hill. We could not levy a charge simply for attending the AGM, and it would be unfair to add a surcharge to the cost of lunch. After discussion, it was agreed that the facilities at How Hill were excellent, and that the charge was acceptable.

Apropos the AGM, the Chairman asked for views about a speaker. Members agreed that it was highly desirable. The Vice Chairman suggested an approach to Tom Williamson of UEA to talk on Staithes (see minute 9 below).

2 Current Year

It was too soon for a report for the current year. The Treasurer would present a report for the first quarter at the next meeting.

6 **CNP**

1 General Report

Robin Godber and Peter Howe had met the recently-appointed CNP Chief Executive, Fiona Howle, and had conducted her on a tour of Broads sites and places of interest. She had enjoyed the day and had appreciated the differences between the Broads and other NPs.

Peter Howe reported on the latest CNP meeting.

- A number of initiatives or phases of work had come to an end and the CNP was considering its future activities and projects.
- It had been noted that some statutory NP authorities (the BA and its equivalents) were setting up fund-raising projects to supplement their income, and these might be in conflict with Societies' own fund raising. This should be kept under review, although Peter felt that Love the Broads worked well with the BA, with little if any conflict.
- As mentioned above, the NP Societies had a wide range of financial positions, and there was no easy way to financial security.

2 National Parks Societies Annual Conference 2016 – 21/23 October

The Treasurer reported that there had been 29 bookings to date, 18 of which were residential. These represented about a third of the expected total bookings. The Chairman commented that such a booking pattern was normal, and that he was sure that the various Societies were promoting the Conference among their members.

The Treasurer would contact the organiser of last years conference to seek advice on last year's booking pattern and any measures that might be taken to encourage attendance.

The Treasurer had engaged a ceilidh band to play on the Friday evening. After consulting Belsey Bridge and the PRS, he intended to purchase a one-day PRS licence, at a cost of about £25.

7 Broads Charitable Trust

Peter Howe reported an income for the previous year of £20,000, and this was expected to increase. The Trust was still seeking grant applications before the end of June.

As mentioned above, relations with the BA were good, and there was little conflict over fund-raising. The BA were targeting large and national companies, while the Trust concentrated on smaller, local firms.

8 Broads Forum

Keith Bacon reported that there had been no Forum meeting since the last committee meeting. Topics of continuing interest were :

- a presentation by Tom Williamson of UEA on Staithes (see 5.1 above re AGM)
- The Broads Plan (see 4.3 above)
- local access plans

9 Publicity and Promotion

Jill Wickens reminded members of planned events :

- Fair on the Yare - 5 June
- Picnic in the Park, Whitlingham – 24 July
- Royal Norfolk Show (see 4.2 above)

Paul Rice mentioned the 90th Anniversary celebration of Herbert Woods, to be held at Potter Heigham on 10 July.

10 Harnser

Jill Wickens repeated her plea for material for the October Harnser, especially for articles of interest to conference delegates. October material should be with Jill BY MID AUGUST.

Jill had received a Broads holiday account from 1912. This would be serialised in Harnser in 2017.

11 Website

Jill Wickens had been in touch with Nick Balls, who had nothing new to report.

12 Issues of Concern

The list of ongoing items of concern items was reviewed and any updates noted as shown below:

- 12.1 Pylons – Lowestoft to Norwich.
- 12.2 Solar Farm Development
- 12.3 River Chet. See report on Southern Rivers Sub-Committee (Minute 13.2) for update on situation at Hardley Flood.
- 4 Water Quality – see 4.3 above
- 5 Climate Change Adaptation – to be addressed by Simon Hooton at the CNP Conference
 - 12.6 Acle Straight
 - 12.7 Norfolk Hub and the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NDR)
- 8 Fracking
- 9 Refuse disposal (new item). To recap and summarise, this concerns the decision by district councils to reclassify refuse from hire craft as “commercial”, leading to the closure of some sites. Paul Rice had been active in working with the BA and local authorities to have sites re-opened and/or alternative provision made. He would continue to report progress.

13 Rivers Sub-Committees and General Planning Matters

13.1 North Rivers Sub-Committee

The minutes of the meeting of 11 April had been circulated.

Keith Bacon reported the Sub-Committee had covered all the waters above Potter Bridge in its annual “outing”.

David Capp asked about the status and future moorings at Thurne Mouth. This was still uncertain.

Paul Rice reported that because of a change of tenant, moorings and access could be restricted at Cockshoot Broad, opposite Horning Ferry and opposite the Swan.

13.2 Southern Rivers Sub-Committee (SRS-C)

The minutes of the meeting of 27 April had been circulated.

Hardley Flood

Robin Godber recapitulated the position summarised in the previous minutes.

The cost of remedial work was estimated at £2.5m, which neither the BA or the EA was likely to find.

It had been pointed out that the result of a catastrophic failure could be the destruction of the SSSI, so it was hoped that Natural England might contribute.

The tidal flow at Pye's Mill was being monitored to gauge the effect on water levels in the Chet.

RSPB was seeking funding for a mooring at Strumpshaw Fen. Some progress was expected. A site meeting with RSPB/SRSC had been arranged for 9th June

14 A.O.B

Paul Rice mentioned a number of recent developments :

- Safety Days. A joint initiative by the Rescue Service, the BA and Broadsbeat, whereby skippers are given advice about dangerous behaviour or boats in a dangerous condition. Also an opportunity to check for payment of tolls, now that plaques are no longer in use.
- Horsey / Brograve culvert. A collapse occurred that could have seriously affected flows and levels throughout the Upper Thurne, dealt with temporarily, but will be costly to rectify long term.
- Berney Arms Inn for sale. RSPB and BA rumoured to be interested in buying it to safeguard its future. Implications for moorings.

15 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 12 July at 7.00 pm at the Hotel Wroxham

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.25 pm

Signed (Chairman)

Date