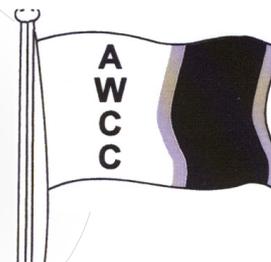


A.W.C.C. ALERT

Association of Waterways Cruising Clubs
www.awcc.org.uk



AUTUMN 2009
EDITION

In this issue



IT'S A FAIR COBB!

David and Sue Botham accepting the prize from the AWCC Free Prize Draw, held at the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) National Waterways Festival (NWF) 2009, held this year at Redhill on the River Soar.

David and Sue from Chesterfield, members of Sea Otter Owners Club and Boaters Christian Fellowship (BCF), both AWCC Clubs, seen here in their boat "Amethyst" about to set off for a BCF gathering at Wolsey bridge.

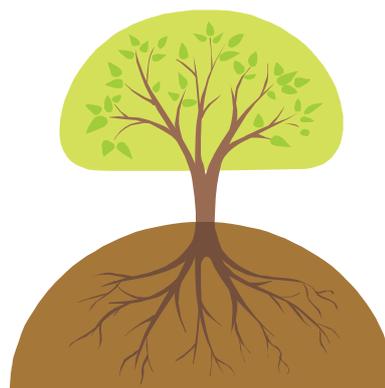
The AWCC Free Prize Draw held at this years NWF as part of the AWCC exhibition stand drew many people to take part, the prize a "Dream Pot" thermal cooker (a modern version of the hay box of times past) was sponsored by the supplier Cobb Barbeques.

David and Sue will now be able to test their "Dream Pot" while cruising up the Trent & Mersey Canal.

15% AWCC member discount—see back page!!

As well as all your regular features from National & Regional Officers

- ◆ 2020 update
- ◆ 2011 calendar photo request
- ◆ Chesterfield Festival 2010
- ◆ Stoke Dippers
- ◆ Alert distribution goes electronic.
- ◆ Your AWCC Family Tree—see centre-spread



Chairman's Report

David Pearce



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Since my last report like many, I have been boating. The four-week trip to the National Rally went very well and surprisingly delivered me back to St Pancras precisely on schedule, with each daily target being met. It did, however, heighten my concern about aspects of deterioration in the system. I made a point of tackling Vince Moran again in his official presentation at the National about such things as the state of some bridges, vegetation – particularly saplings growing out of the piling and the overall top problem of shortage of cash. I suggested that the management of the property portfolio development to world class standards was essential in the cash debate. Vince did give encouragement for boaters to deal with the sapling problem if they found it on an overnight mooring. The several vegetation management teams I observed seemed ill-equipped to deal with saplings.

Boaters encouraged to do their own pruning when mooring on canal and bridges in danger of imminent collapse!

On the subject of bridges in a poor state, I passed one on the Leicester summit that illustrated my general point. It is in danger of imminent collapse, beyond economic repair and not needed for any obvious linking of route purpose. It is my view that, regardless of listing, such examples need to be demolished ASAP. I believe that our position with regard to the heritage lobby, including local authorities, has to be that we cannot afford to save everything and that choices have to be made and restricted to good and worthwhile examples.

Our latest National Executive meeting was held at Tamworth Cruising Club on 3 October – a big thank you to Tamworth for hosting us - and the various officer and region reports are included in this edition of Alert.

EXTERNAL MATTERS

The campaigning season is underway and two major meetings took place in October: The BW Annual Meeting at Birmingham and the WUSIG (Waterway User & Special Interest Groups which is what the six monthly national user group meeting is now called) at Hatton. —the latter meeting discussed the matter of pinch points on the system which has been on-going for at least 20 years. We should take trouble to ensure that the document issued by BW is accurate and we need to ask all Regional Chairman to seek local knowledge on all pinch points. (Some discussion points from the NEC meeting are highlighted below). The BW 2020 proposal was the main subject of BW Annual meeting and also featured strongly at WUSIG—see report opposite.

Future Meetings where AWCC interests will be represented:

EA NNUF (*National Navigation User's Forum*) and PWG (*Parliamentary Waterways Group*) -both in October
AINA (Assoc. of Inland Navigation Authorities) Conference on Volunteering & BAAF, (Advisory Forum) - both in November

David Pearce

Pinch-point discussion points:

What do BW do when a 'structure' has moved? There is an Assets Register with conditions attached- some structures are in very poor condition.

Do BW have a system in place to maintain feedback on the conditions of their assets from boaters? **Boaters should report problems to BW when they have occurred- use comment cards.** BW must ensure that they do not create pinch points themselves when carrying out repairs!

AWCC would look into creating a site on the web where members could report problems/ pinch points.

2020 DEVELOPMENTS

I attended the British Waterways Annual meeting at Birmingham. Tony Hales, the BW Chairman concentrated discussions on the BW 2020 proposal and the meeting overran considerably. BW has found a couple of consultants that really know a lot about the Third Sector. Their presentation was most and it gave confidence that BW has thrown the problems to be overcome. much concern about general particularly with an election coming year, but the matter was somewhat gained. John Edmonds, Chairman of IW commented that 11 years was a long time, "If we are going to do it, we should do it with it!" There was much agreement with that sentiment, which was how the meeting closed.

"Eleven years is NOT a long time.—If we are going to do it, we should get on with it!"

John Edmonds

then at least a Phase 1 should be proposed and implemented quickly, particularly as the outline proposal appears to have all party support at Westminster. I think that this is achievable as long as the lawyers are not allowed to dominate. However, I made the point that I have now been for several years. If BW is to move the Third Sector, they absolutely MUST be allowed to retain their property portfolio as an asset. Even the former sceptics can appreciate the importance of this one and reps were very vocal on the matter. So Mr Gerry Edmonds, AWCC is watching you and the matter very closely!

David

The following day was the six monthly meeting of national user groups at Hatton, where the proposal was discussed in a bit more detail.

Again, the sentiment was, if its worth doing

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From our National Officers



Technical Report

Andrew Phasey

The next technical committee meeting is scheduled for December and the agenda is yet to be set. We hope to have a report for you on this in the next edition of Alert.

The British Standard on Solid Fuel Stoves is soon to be published—All the user groups are still dissatisfied with the insulated chimney proposal.

All Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) examiners are undergoing additional electrical training and assessment which will be continuing until spring. This is part of our continuing professional development and will help us to deal with the more complicated systems that are now found on boats.

Andrew

Treasurer
Geoff Ashton

We are still solvent! :)



BSS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

- ◆ The Management Committee have asked for the risks of electrocution from boaters AC shore power leads to be reviewed by the Technical Committee.
- ◆ There may be a limit placed on the time allowed between a failed examination and the retest otherwise the test may need to be retaken.
- ◆ A check may be included on roof mounted 'bulls eye' lights to watch out for signs of scorching to lens surrounds and adjacent furnishing etc.

Inland waterway incidents and accidents to 25th Aug/2009:

Totals	60	
Fire Explosion	44	1 fatality*
CO	1	
Man overboard	3	3 fatalities**
Capsize, collision, sinking	9	
Personal injury	0	

*The causes of the single fire fatality that took place on the K&A has not been confirmed but candles are suspected.

**Of the 3 MOB fatalities, one was a man falling off his boat changing a gas cylinder, the second a lady falling from a hire boat whilst in a lock (Cropreddy) the last was a man falling from a tender while attempting to board a main vessel.

Malcolm Wood



QuarterMaster
Terence Balchin

A quiet summer, some sales at Redhill IWA Festival.

Some Regions now have Calendars to sell and some clubs too, still waiting for the rush; think Christmas presents !

Terence

NEW AWCC WEBSITE FEATURES

ALERT.

Starting with this edition, a downloadable version of ALERT as a PDF file will be made available at the top of the ALERT page about the same time that that Clubs normally receive a paper copy for local use. As soon as the ALERT is available on the website, we will send out an e-mail containing a link to regional secretaries and regional reps. We will ask them in turn to pass the information on electronically to Clubs that the new ALERT is now available. We hope that this will allow more AWCC Club members to download their own copy of the ALERT magazine.

Please feel free to download and print out copies of ALERT for your own and other Club members use as you wish.

MEMBERS ONLY

This section will be used to contain information such as the Club handbook, Club location maps to help plan your next years cruising, special members only offers and other privileged information not for public use.

I am building a Club information database with the help of regional secretaries and members of the AWCC Exec which will hold information about Clubs and their facilities. As well as providing up to date information on the Club officers, this database will also be used to manage the Club Handbook. A limited number of AWCC officers will have access to this database so it can be kept up to date as Club information changes. As changes are made, the handbook information will be updated. I intend to use this information to publish the Handbook in an electronically downloadable format, both as single pages for a loose leaf version of the handbook, one club per page and a full version of the handbook in a condensed format suitable for printing and binding as an A5 handbook. You will be able to download and print as many of the pages as you wish

In addition to the handbook, we hope to provide accurate location maps of the Clubs (who opt to provide us with this information) so that you can plan your cruises and visits to other Clubs.

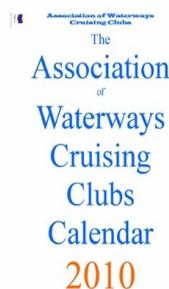
This section is not currently live but I plan to have it available before the end of the year, sooner if possible. We will provide one members login per club, although we may be able to offer individual logins to Club members at some time in the future.

Please note that these developments are not intended to replace printed versions of ALERT or of the Handbook, which will still be available in the normal way. We are aware that many boaters and club members don't or can't access the Internet in many situations, but they continue to be able to obtain paper copies of this information where that suits them. We hope that the new website facility will make this easier and more flexible.

I hope to meet some of you face to face as I will be attending a number of regional meetings to talk about these developments, so will welcome your thoughts and suggestions if you are there. Alternatively, just e-mail me at communications@awcc.org.uk or fill in the comments form on the AWCC Website.

Brian Rich
www.awcc.org.uk

Calendar Success for 2010, now for 2011



Following the success of the 2010 AWCC calendar, we are already thinking ahead to 2011. The theme for 2011 will be "Waterways for all Seasons"

Please submit photos by February 2010, in any format, to Geoff Ashton National Treasurer. Contact details in the Handbook. We aim to produce the 2011 Calendar in the first quarter of 2010, for sale throughout 2010.. Please include contact details of photographer, AWCC Club and location of photo..

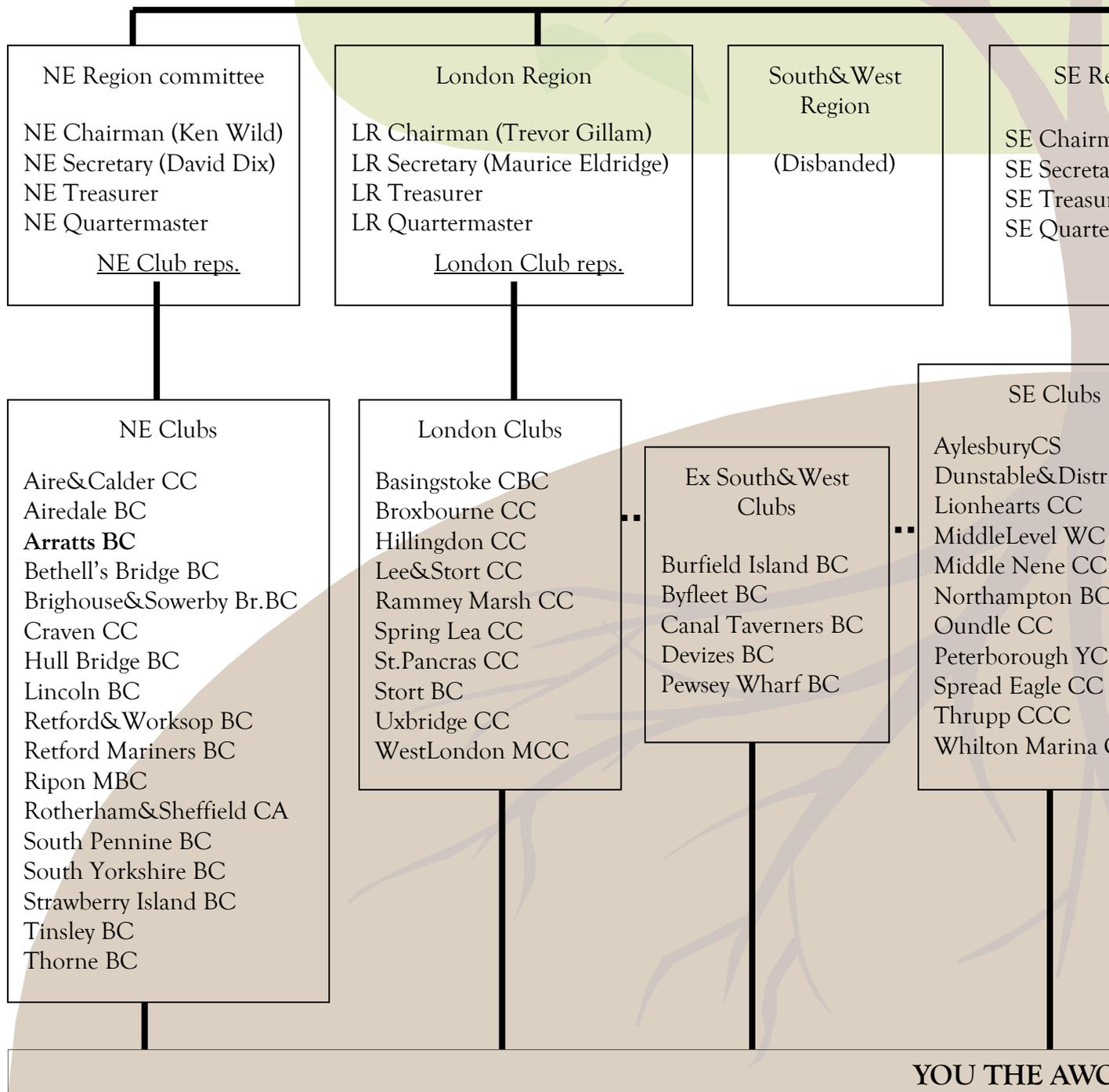
THE AWCC

National Executive

NEC Chairman (David Pearce)
 NEC Vice Chairman (Paul Le Blique)
 NEC Secretary (Ann Banks)
 NEC Treasurer (Geoff Ashton)
 NEC Communications Officer (Brian Rich)

National Quartermaster
 National Technical Office
 Parliamentary Representative
 'Alert' Editor (Sally Moon)

Regional Chairmen



FAMILY TREE

Executive Committee (NEC)

Terence Balchin)
 er (Andrew Phasey)
 tive (vacant)
 e)

President (John Baggs)

Honorary Vice Presidents:
 Alan Hodgkinson, David Butcher
 Howard Smith, Tony Mason, Trevor Gillam
 2 Co-opted Committee members:
 Keith Noble & Dick Elder

Men and Secretaries:

Region committee

man (Paul Le Blique)
 ry (Jenny Sullivan)
 rer
 rmaster

SE Club reps.

NW Region committee

NW Chairman (Roland Dotchin)
 NW Secretary (Nick Culliford)
 NW Treasurer
 NW Quartermaster

NW Club reps.

Midlands Region

MR Chairman (Graham Myatt)
 MR Secretary (Erica Martin)
 MR Treasurer
 MR Quartermaster

Midland Club reps.

NW Clubs

Acton Bridge CC
 Assoc. of Cruising Enthusiasts
 Bridgewater MBC
 Broken Cross BC
 Croke CC
 DouglasValley CC
 EastLancs&WestYorks BC
 FurnessVale BC
 Lancaster BCC
 Latham MCA
 Lymm CC
 Mersey MBC
 Nantwich&Border Counties YC
 North Cheshire CC
 Preston Brook BOA
 Sale CC
 Tudor CC
 Watch House CC
 Weaver MBC
 Wheelton BC
 Worsley CC

Clubs of

'No Fixed Abode'

Boaters Christian Fellowship
 Cutweb Internet BC
 Electric Boat Assoc.
 Seamaster Club
 Waterway Recovery Group
 Wilderness BC

Reps from these clubs attend
 their local regional meting.—
 most subscribe to Midlands
 region at present.

Midlands Clubs

Ash Tree BC
 Coombeswood CT
 Coventry CS
 Derby MBC
 Erewash CP&DA
 Fradley Junction CC
 Friendship BC
 Hinckley BC
 Longwood BC
 Norbury CC
 Saul Junction BOC
 Soar BC
 Stafford BC
 Stoke-on-Trent BC
 Stourbridge NT
 Tamworth CC
 Wolverham BC
 Ashby Canal Assoc.
 Black Buoy CC
 Lichfield CC
 Mid Warks YC
 Nottingham YC
 Swarkestone BC

From our Regions



North East
Ken Wild

Development of Granary Wharf, Leeds. I had a meeting with BW and ISIS (the developers of Granary Wharf) to discuss what facilities we would like in the boaters service area. They are putting in a Shower, Elsan disposal point, Toilet facility and possibly a laundry room. All due to be opened by March next year.

Also discussed the Dry dock which will be available for bottom blacking and similar work—unfortunately they are not allowed to put a roof over it. We also discussed mooring fees and we

told them if they charged for overnight then boaters would just move on to areas which were still quite close and free.

The question of mooring bollards was also discussed and we pointed out that there needs to be sufficient bollards to enable small cruisers to moor without having to stretch ropes across where other craft could moor. There is also a problem at the moment with lock access from the canal side and we asked for additional bollards adjacent to the top of the lock.

South Yorkshire Subsidence. South Yorkshire Boat Club have had discussions with BW

Engineers regarding the state of the moorings at the top side of Whitley lock due to the massive subsidence since Kellingley Colliery pinched all the coal from under and around the lock. BW have promised to improve the safety and make it more boater friendly.

Ken

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CHESTERFIELD CANAL FESTIVAL

17/18 July 2010

Worksop Rugby Club

This will be held as part of Bassetlaw Arts Fortnight and there will be loads of interesting exhibitions and eye-catching performances going on continuously as well as the usual stalls, rides, boats and trips, etc.

Worksop Rugby Club has huge fields bordering the canal at Morse Lock, near the A57.

Rod Auton



Midland

Graham Myatt

Quiet period with no regional meeting. Hopefully everyone cruising and enjoying the warm, dry weather.

Around the system it is very noticeable and often commented on that **congestion is increasing and maintenance is decreasing.**

I attended the meeting re: **2020**. It appears to hinge upon a guaranteed grant in aid with no plan B.!

IWA Redhill Festival

My thanks to Soar BC for the storage of the stall and to those who turned up to help with putting it up and taking it down. Special thanks to John Wilkinson. for all his help.

Graham

STOKE DIPPERS

Stoke on Trent Boat Club held its end of season cruise to Cherry Eye bridge on the Caldon Canal, a favourite venue, where there is a wide towpath. 20 boats were booked to come.

One fell by the wayside because the elderly feline crew was very poorly. Another could not make it having got stuck under the bridge at the Black Lion pub at Consall and had to be towed off. Despite BW's attendance, it was not possible for the boat to pass.

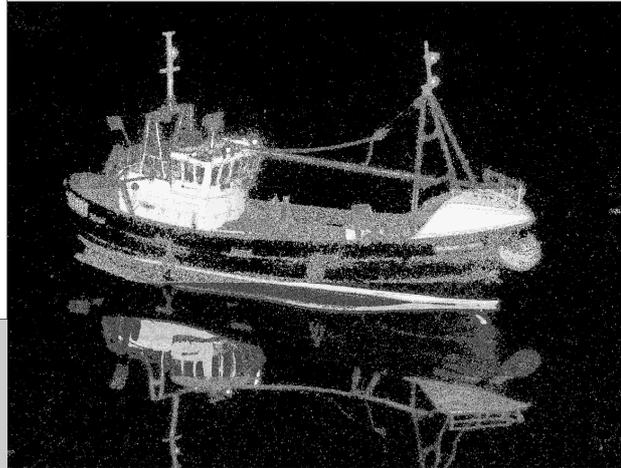
A third boat broke down but the skipper managed to get there in the end

... and to crown the weekend's problems, harbourmaster, John Eaves, found himself unexpectedly taking a midnight dip, returning to his boat after our bonfire gathering. Luckily two club members were on hand to pull him out, and he seems none the worse for this.

SOTBC has an annual trophy for the most spectacular unexpected 'dip in the cut' during the year. John is in contention for this, but

the competition is fierce, with two others members falling in when cruising, and another who fell off the side deck when cleaning the boat, moored in the club arm. The winner will be announced at the laying-up supper in November... Watch this space...

and MOONLIT REGATTA



You might wonder what is the connection Stoke on Trent Boat Club, when you learn that this vessel was photographed in the club's arm in October. how did it get through the locks, and bridge holes? Simple! This is one of many model boats being cruised in the club arm, for the Moonlight Regatta of the Potteries Model Boat Club. These radio-controlled scale models have the freedom of club waters for the evening, cruising by moonlight, and with lanterns strung around the water's edge. Club members mingle with PMBC 'skippers', some even having a go at radio controlling, not as easy as we might think!

A pie and peas supper was served to members of both clubs, with a grand raffle to follow. RNLI **had a stand selling** Christmas cards, gifts and giving out information.

This is an annual event, which the clubs have shared for some twenty years.

Erica Martin
Stoke-on-Trent Boat Club



South East

Association of Nene River Clubs.

The website is up and running and a link to the AWCC should be included.

Thrupp Canal Cruising Club have been improving facilities for club members and visiting boaters. The committee had heard rumours that boaters receive an unfriendly reception at Thrupp. If anyone has heard of complaints please contact Alan Ross so that the committee can rectify the matter.

New Marina Northampton. There is concern that when this is completed that the increase in boat traffic will have difficulty negotiating the Northampton Arm.

AGM. The region would be holding its AGM on 13th Nov. Sadly Paul Le Blique will be standing down as our chairman. His leadership will be sadly missed.

Making AWCC Known. As a region we are having a new drive to attract more reps. for the committee. We intend to send out letters to clubs to remind them about the AWCC in our area and along with the leaflets hope this will make an impact. Communications should be kept open possible. We think it is a good idea that AWCC reports be included in club committee agendas. At my own club (Oundle CC) I have asked for a board to display AWCC news.

Jenny Sullivan
SE Region Secretary

North West



NW's 3 new adventures have all been visited by many boaters:

Liverpool Link has been enjoyed and reported as worth a visit, mooring in the heart of Liverpool, with the City's many attractions a short walk away. The restriction of 6 boats a day caused some clubs to defer their club cruises, hoping BW can make better arrangements perhaps for next year.

Boaters preferred the new self steering through the **Stannedge Tunnel**, though were disrupted by a major breach on the west side of the Huddersfield Narrow.

Congratulations to Worsely CC, first club to do the **Manchester Bury Bolton Canal**. 19 boats cruised the MBBC in June, a successful visit in all ways.

Concerns: NW Region is still concerned about the proposed closure of the Service area at **Marple**, which would leave a huge gap in boaters service on the Cheshire ring.

Watch House Boat club has asked me to report that they are in **litigation** with two of their members. NW Region have asked that the problem of ligation against Clubs be placed on the Agenda for the next National Executive meeting.

Roland Dotchin

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2020—THE ALTERNATIVE VERSION

Folk out there are very worried about what state the waterways might be in by 2020. IWA have launched an SOS campaign <http://www.waterways.org.uk/SOS2010> which AWCC is supporting along with many other waterways organisations.. You will have already read our Chairman's report on page 3 and seen our Midlands Chairman's comments on page 9. Here's a bit more food for thought....

Extracts from a Communication from
NIGEL STEVENS (Shire Cruisers MD):

WATERWAYS FOR YESTERDAY

There are, very broadly, 4 competing versions of the future:

1. BW becomes a third sector organisation, somehow immune from government yet still reliant on public money.
2. A new body is created to control BW and the EA. New locally-based streams of public funding are secured.
3. Waterways for Everyone sets targets for wider public benefits to be provided by navigation authorities, and suggests means for enhancing co-operation between government departments – and maybe even joint funding.
4. BW's Estate is privatised, with or without the waterways.

Broadly, the first three ideas seek to broaden or extend public funding to ensure a stable future, whereas the fourth idea seeks significantly to reduce the call on public funds.

Whoever forms the next government, the twin imperatives driving the Treasury will remain: public spending must be cut, and privatisation is seen as a quick way of reducing the PSBR. Sale of the banks and the motorways could bring in incomparably more money, but government will need all it can get, so the waterways may not be exempt. BW in its present form is presumably considered 'untenable', but reforms which simply reshuffle the sources of public money are not likely to get much ministerial attention. Radical measures which apparently save a lot of money might be much more attractive. Thus Waterways for Everyone might rapidly become Waterways for Yesterday.

Please copy within your organisation if required.

Best wishes,
Nigel Stevens

Extracts from Geoff Ashton's
response. (AWCC National
Treasurer)

“The golden age might be over...”

As usual, Nigel has produced a thought provoking paper - I guess his forecast of possible privatisation at least in parts is pretty accurate given current state of PSBR etc. One could foresee closures of less used canals, increased charges for the rest, but not so high as to reduce usage to uneconomic levels. One has to wonder who is going to buy motorways, tunnels, canals etc, but his point about PFI being a future risk to taxpayers is probably valid - will any government be worried about who picks up the final tab in 50 years time?

The National Trust model probably won't work. Membership is their rock plus bequests and regular appeals for donations from members and dowries for donated properties. They always have some appeal going on for some potentially iconic building like Tyntesfield . Will Joe Public see a muddy canal as similarly iconic? People want to look round stately houses or walk cliffs and moors. They can already walk canals if they want so why should they join a canal trust - how is the Waterways Trust doing at the moment? NT uses volunteers for house sitting and gardening mainly. Not sure they do masonry courses or let volunteers loose on restoration jobs - they do not as far as I know have an equivalent of WRG!

Geoff

SNIPPETS

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I hope that helps and your members take up the offer for what is an absolutely brilliant product.

Regards
Graham Cobb

AWCC Communications Questionnaire

Feedback showed a very poor visibility rating!

Paper copies will continue to go to club secretaries for noticeboard display and/or member circulation.

We are going to try to increase viewing by supplementing this with cascaded email copies. These will be sent to regional secretaries who will cascade down the family-tree to clubs and thence to you the members.

If you are not getting an email copy and would like one—ask your club secretary! If you are a club secretary and not getting one, then ask your AWCC rep to nudge your regional secretary! The buck stops at Brian Rich :)

Elaine's walk for Uncle Malc

Elaine Knight recently did a sponsored walk in aid of Trinity Hospice and Brian House Children's Hospice in memory of our dear friend Malcolm J Jones, past Chairman of NW Region, aka 'My Uncle Malc'.

"It was a fabulous walk - hard but thoroughly enjoyed! Its hard to believe that is the first anniversary of Malcolm's passing. Where does the time go?"

She has so far raised a brilliant £622 and the figure is slowly rising - the website is open until March next year :
<http://www.justgiving.com/elaineknight2>

This issue of AWCC Alert was produced by Sally Moore of South Pennine Boat Club.

Please email copy for the next issue by Thursday 10th December 2009 to :
alert@awcc.org.uk

Contacts:

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Chairman, David Pearce: chairman@awcc.org.uk

Secretary, Ann Banks: secretary@awcc.org.uk

Communications & Webmaster: Brian Rich: communications@awcc.org.uk

Note. The editor reserves the right to edit copy and views expressed may not be those of the AWCC

What is the mission of the AWCC?

AWCC represent the particular interests of inland waterways club boaters as one of the larger user groups in the UK. We foster the principles of self-help in the creation of club moorings and other facilities, including all the other social aspects of boating, and extend a welcoming hand to all like-minded boaters. We join with other associations to campaign for a better future for the inland waterways.

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AWCC, The Yacht Basin, Camley Street, London NW1 OPL.
<http://www.awcc.org.uk>