

CamBoaters Community Association Minutes of Committee Meeting, 25 October 2005

Chair: Craig Darbyshire

Present: Mike Smith, Lesley Hall, Eamon Heneghan, Fred, Lesley, Mark Rogers, Paul Mennell, Dave Ponnitney, Toni Smith, Lindsay Mills, Richard Allen, Mike Priestnall

Apologies: Luther Phillips, Rob King, PK, Suzie Eiloart

1. Report from City Council Meeting

Mark reported back on questions brought up with the council, re the mooring policy. The following information was gleaned. This is all subject to approval by councillors.

- There will be an 'emergency' number we can call if someone is moored illegally.
- Boaters will not get 70ft of space each.
- Long term cruising will not affect moorings if the permit has been paid for.
- There will be two extra water points — perhaps at Cutter Ferry bridge (a mooring spot will be lost) and on Stourbridge (ditto), although Mark is hoping to get them to consider instead one outside the Pike & Eel, and one by the Fort. He told the council that having one by Green Dragon bridge was not a good idea.
- Refuse collection: boaters will get 60 sacks each, to be left by the bins. There will be more bins and they will have hinged lids.
- No progress on bank access. Richard suggested persuading them to put in steps at intervals.
- Dredging: The council want to know which areas need dredging. They are not convinced that they must pay.
- Council tax: they are reviewing the situation. No boater will be charged both mooring fee and tax.
- Wide-beams: preference is for boaters to manage areas themselves.

2. Invoices

Richard needs all invoices ASAP. We need to get signatories changed for the bank account.

There was discussion about what we do when somebody wishes to spend some money. It was generally agreed that if it's for an 'everyday expense' such as photocopying, it's OK; otherwise it needs to be brought up in committee or with the Chair, Secretary or Treasurer. There will be an expenses form, which must be filled in and submitted with invoices.

3. Membership Cards

People wanted to see more information on the card, such as useful phone numbers (especially Colin's), and a membership expiry date.

Lindsay agreed to take control of the membership cards. She will collect applications and give the money to Richard.

4. CamCon Report

Luther wasn't present so there was no report from the September meeting. Mike (who sat in on the meeting) said not much that was relevant had been discussed.

There was discussion of items to bring up with the CamCon. Mark would like to explore opening up a stretch of mooring between Bait's Bite lock and Clayhithe, perhaps for those boats which do not get mooring in town. Most agreed that we should bring this up, although Mike Priestnall said he didn't think the CamCon would buy it. Craig pointed out that the biggest objectors would probably be anglers.

Mike Smith brought up the suggestion of a water point at Bait's Bite, which had been mentioned at the last meeting, where Geoff Facer had advised that things like this be brought up via our CamCon rep.

Craig pointed out that we can't pursue anything unless the CamCon Rep is present. Everyone agreed that representation is an important issue we need to discuss at the next meeting.

5. Report from Keep Cambridge Tidy group

PK wasn't present. Mark said he'd heard that the meeting were appreciative of what boaters had done with the Cam Clean-ups. Lesley suggested that for the next one, we put a 'calling card' on each bag of rubbish collected.

6. Events

Toni distributed cards with ideas for events, asking people to fill in what they were prepared to do, and what they thought were good ideas.

For Children In Need she suggested collecting in fancy dress, like last year. Agreement that it was a good idea. Mark would like to run a 'bike clinic' on the towpath.

For the Christmas gathering, Friday 16th December was chosen. A meal was preferred, venue to be decided.

7. Council Tax

Paul said he had ordered a leaflet from RBOA which explains tax issues for boaters. He pointed out that it is dependent on a judge to interpret the law.

There was much discussion (with no resolution) about the pros and cons of paying tax over a mooring fee, The meeting was split over what rights boaters were getting for their money.

There was also much discussion on the issue of common land with regard to tax. Eamon pointed out the case of a boater in Harlow, which went to court, with the result that the council could not charge a mooring fee on common land held in trust by the council. This means that any council tax payer can moor alongside a bank on common land, whether they pay a mooring fee or not.

It was decided to set up a working group to bring this to the council's attention as soon as possible. The group will consist of Mark, Craig, Paul and Eamon. Mark said he would call Debbie Kaye tomorrow.

8. AOB

Paul proposed that we take corporate membership of RBOA, as this gives us access to more advice. Cost is £60. This was seconded by Mark. Passed unanimously.

Meeting closed.

The next meeting will be at the Howard Mallett Centre, Sturton Street, Monday 28th November at 7.30.