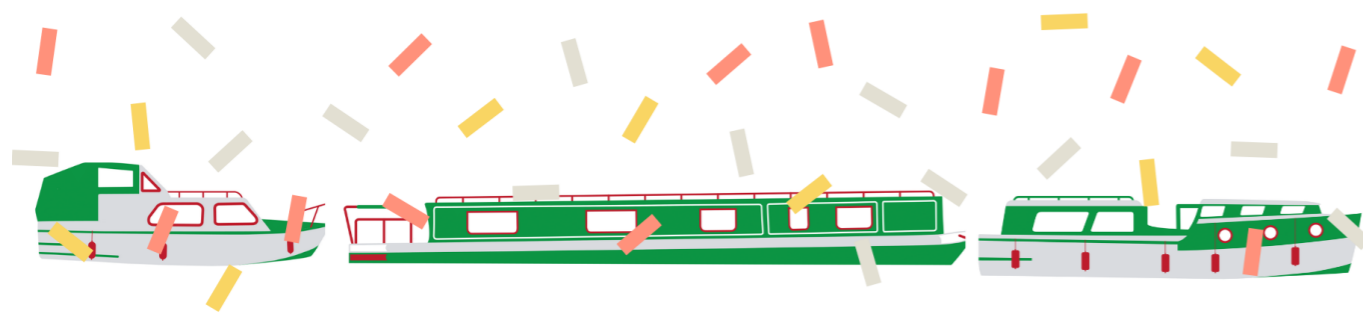




# HACKNEY PROTEST PICNIC

**Sunday 26 June**

We're getting together to **STOP THE BOAT CULL** and to **celebrate** making our lives on the water!



**12 noon** on Walthamstow Marshes,  
opposite the Anchor & Hope pub

All are welcome

**NBTA** **#boatsarehomes**

<https://nbtalondon.wordpress.com/>



## HUNDREDS OF BOATERS MARCH TO FIGHT FOR MOORINGS

On Saturday 26 March 2022, hundreds of boaters marched on Canal & River Trust's (CRT) main London office to protest the Trust's continued attack on the capital's liveaboard boating community.

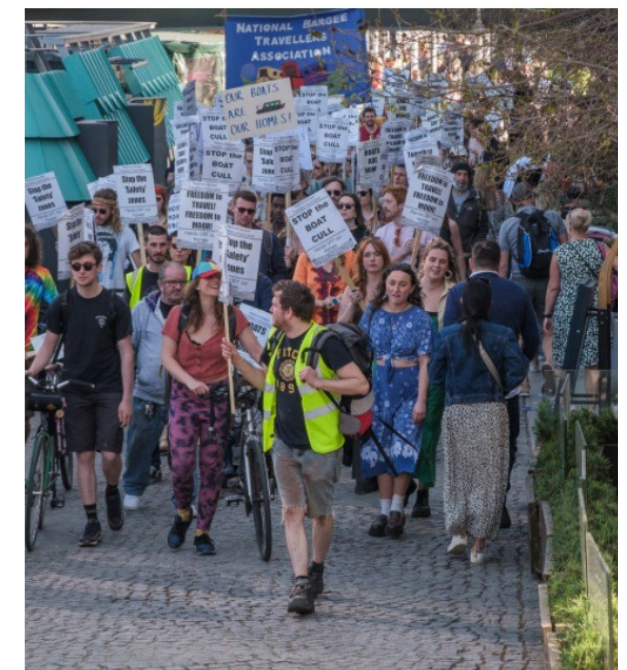
Starting in Regents Park, the protest marched to CRT's offices in Little Venice where they were addressed by speakers from the boating community and land based supporters and engaged with the public to explain how these discriminatory policy changes are threatening people's livelihoods.

Since London's boaters forced CRT into a consultation on their plan to remove up to 550 mooring places on the River Lea in 2021, the Trust has doubled down on their plans to cull boats from London's waterways as they plan to introduce reduced mooring times on the Grand Union and more chargeable moorings in Central London.

"This continued disregard for the people who live and work in these new 'no mooring' and proposed paid-for mooring areas drives boaters away from their livelihoods, and out of their homes," argues Ian McDowell, chair of the London branch of NBTA. "By ignoring its responsibility to preserve the waterways for all communities, CRT is crossing a dangerous line that could see London Waterways and other waterways become usable only by those who can afford any extra costs CRT chooses to introduce in addition to the licence fee.

Their actions only serve to show that while CRT markets themselves as a charity that promotes wellbeing, they repeatedly try to introduce policies which attack boaters' wellbeing and way of life."

NBTA and London Boaters have fought and prevented unfair and destructive attempts like these before, and we will do so again. NBTA London demands that CRT concentrates on its mandate to maintain the navigation with things like dredging. The Trust must stop destroying boating communities by favouring one kind of boater over another.



Join the campaign to protect our rights— help discuss, plan and volunteer at future events.

## MOORINGS THREATENED IN HARLESDEN

The green space in Harlesden, which is many boaters' most popular West London mooring, is being gentrified by developers in tandem with the mayor's office. The 'regeneration' claims to be creating a 'boaters' paradise', but will involve replacing the grass verge with mooring rings (which are easy to remove in the future) and will take away 3 visitor mooring spaces which will be replaced with 'community boats and a canoe pontoon. Because the canal to the East and West of Harlesden is too shallow to moor on, this reduces capacity in Harlesden by approximately 20%.

Apparently as a compensation measure, the developers are installing an elsan and water point at the West end of the stretch, but we remember that CRT promised us facilities years ago. So, in reality, these moorings spaces are being taken without any compensation measures being made. This is yet another example of CRT working with developers behind our backs and to our detriment.

While the NBTA have objected to the planning proposal, we are considering the

next steps we should take to fight for the moorings.

If you would like to get involved in this, please email [nbtalondon@gmail.com](mailto:nbtalondon@gmail.com) to let us know that you want to help.

For more information about the development, see here:

<https://consult.opdc.london.gov.uk/harlesdencanalside>

**Please help us to continue our work by donating or/and setting up a standing order using these bank details here:**

Account name: National Barge Travellers Association

Account number: 32390422

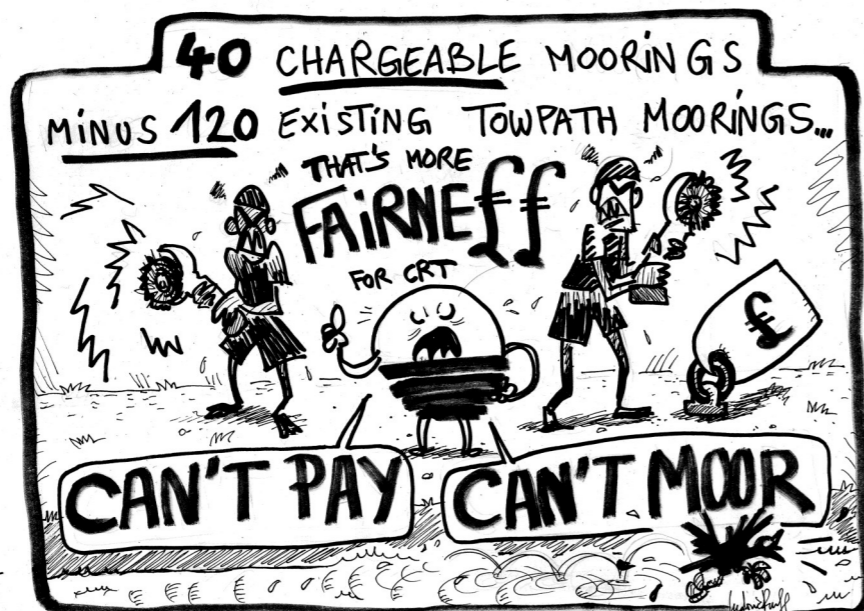
Sort code: 23-05-80

Here are the sort of things we spend the money we raise on:

- Printing – newsletters, placards and flyers.
- Caseworker Office/ storage.
- Public Events

**Want to stay up to date with NBTA London?**

You can join the email list, by emailing [nbtalondon@gmail.com](mailto:nbtalondon@gmail.com) and ask to be put on the mailing list.



## TRIGGER PARRY'S BROOM

Anyone who takes the time to read Canal and Rivers Trust's (CRT) regular cure for insomnia - the Boaters' Update – will know that the Trust likes to go on about how they are in charge of a 200 year old system, naturally giving the impression that they are doing an outstanding job of it. But this raises a couple of questions – can the system really be called 200 years old, and are they doing an outstanding job?

Have you ever thought about how old everything really is? Take for example one of the most iconic pieces of canal infrastructure – locks, and in particular lock gates. Lock gates have a life span of... 25 years, so you definitely won't be using any 200 year old lock gates in the near future. The same goes for the towpaths which now support a lot more traffic than the original towpaths were designed for (the Regent's Canal towpath goes all the way back to...1979)...and the metal armco piling which holds the canal in... definitely not 200 years old. I'm sure you can think of other things. It really is Trigger's Broom from the British comedy, Only Fools and Horses made real! ("with 17 heads and 14 handles; how can it be the same broom" ...)

But what about where truly old things need looking after? Well CRT are bigging up

their impending work on the Toddbrook reservoir dam in the Peak district. The dam was completed in 1840. In 2016 one of the spillways, which had been added in 1970, started to collapse following a week long deluge of rain. The reservoir was full to the brim and the town of Whaley Bridge had to be evacuated for six days as the 80 foot tall dam – which held back over one and a quarter billion litres of water - was at risk of breaching. While the poor design and build of the spillway was central to the collapse, CRT's poor maintenance and reporting systems were identified as major contributory factors. Of course, no mention of this is made in your latest BoaterZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ Update.

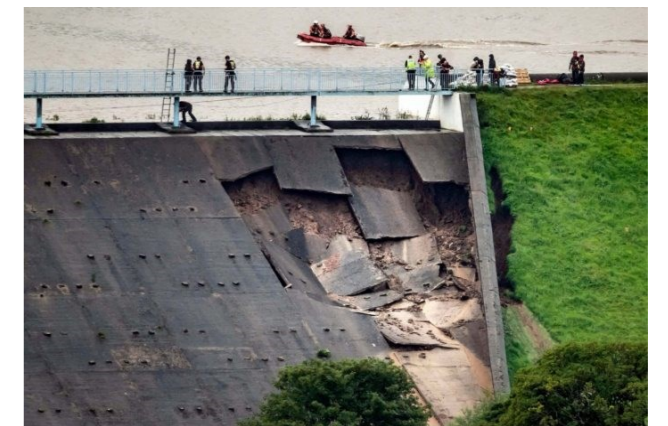


Image from <https://damfailures.org/case-study/toddbrook-reservoir-dam-england-2019/>

## NBTA MEETINGS

**Meetings are held on the last Sunday of each month at 4pm.**

The meeting can be accessed online via:

<https://8x8.vc/nbta/nbta>

Alternatively, you can use the dial in details:

Dial-in: +44 330 808 1706 PIN: 45925961#

**EVERYONE WELCOME**



We are the London branch of the **National Barge Travellers Association (NBTA)**. The NBTA is an organization open to all but run by boaters without a home mooring. We campaign for the rights of boat dwellers.

## MEETING AT MAYOR'S OFFICE

On 14 March 2022, NBTA London had a meeting with Deborah Halling, **Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY about NBTA Pan London Needs Assessment For Boat Dwellers Without A Home Mooring.**

In the meeting, which was requested by Deborah Halling, NBTA reminded the Mayor's office of the relevant excerpt of the existing policy for itinerant boaters, including that it was imperative for the Housing to talk direct with NBTA rather than CRT with regard to number of boats without a home mooring, and what the needs are for boat dwellers without a home mooring. We informed her of CRT's continued reduction of mooring spaces, of CRT's refusal to have a consultation till NBTA our pressure on CRT to do so. We also explained some basic mooring terminology, and why "bookable" moorings

should not compromise existing towpath mooring spaces.

We suggested that planning could have some weight with developers in ensuring that mooring spaces in the developed area are not taken away or restricted for boat dwellers without home moorings, for example; furthermore, simple and inexpensive facilities could be encouraged to be installed (water taps, secure boaters bins/recycling) alongside land residential facilities.

In follow-up emails after the meeting the question of grants for boat dwellers without home moorings for solar panels (thus reducing emissions whilst moored) has also been raised.

Deborah Halling was apparently committed to continuing talks with NBTA about **Pan London Needs Assessment For Boat Dwellers Without A Home Mooring.**

## CRT'S SKEWED SPENDING

It is possible to see the priorities of an organisation by what they spend their money on. On London waterways, CRT spends more money on enforcement than on boaters' facilities.

The cost of wages & equipment for Licensing Support Officers and Rangers and Mooring Rangers in 2020 was roughly £371k. Additionally, from October to the end of December CRT spent £24,840 on the District Enforcement in 'safety' zones. CRT has budgeted an extra £180k for District Enforcement for this year. Enforcement isn't the only thing they like to spend their money on.

For 2020 Stuart Mills, the Investment Officer, received a salary and benefits totalling £236,936.

CRT also paid the head of CRT, Richard Parry, a salary and benefits totalling, £226,346.

It cost CRT £463,282 for just two salaries in one year.

\*\*\*We we're unable to calculate how much the CRT executive team costs in total as the two salaries mentioned were the only ones published, there was no data for the rest of the team, so we can only imagine!\*\*\*

However, in the same year CRT spent only £350K on boater facilities on the London Waterways.

So to recap, the figures are as follows:

£395K for enforcement on London Waterways

£463K on the salary and benefits of just two staff at the CRT executive team

and just £350K on boaters facilities on the London Waterways.

## 'SAFETY ZONES' CONTINUED..

As many of you know, when the CRT first proposed the full details of the Water "Safety" Zones, we calculated that 550 mooring spaces would be lost in Broxbourne and Tottenham/Hackney. In some places the CRT also proposed introducing a ban on double mooring and wider boats. Following the magnificent efforts of the boating community to push back against these "Safety" Zones, CRT initially appeared to desist from their implementation, in favour of a navigation forum of stakeholders. Unfortunately the CRT are still attempting to impose potentially the most draconian part of the original "Safety" Zones outline – the new no mooring sections. We now estimate that 295 casual mooring opportunities are at risk.

In October of last year the CRT lied to us by stating that they were putting the 'safety' zones on hold, pending a discussion within the Lea Navigation Forum meeting.

However, before the first Forum meeting had taken place, the CRT had already installed 'no mooring' signs on most of the 'no mooring' sites on their Water Safety Zone map.

We (NBTA London) brought this dishonest behaviour to the attention of the Lee Navigation Forum. CRT's response was to disregard the dishonesty of their own actions which undermining the whole Lee Navigation Consultation. We asked for reasoning from CRT to why each 'no mooring' spaces were made as such. CRT didn't provide this.

We then provided this document stating our opinion of each 'no mooring' site at the very next meeting. More than half a year later CRT have yet to give a proper response. During that half year, boaters moored in places that are perfectly reasonable and safe have continued to receive unjustified threats from CRT.

In total, CRT paid £24,840 from October - January to a car parking company called District Enforcement (DE) to attempt to implore our community not to moor on these sites. Thankfully people continue to moor in these places in large numbers.

The CRT stated that on January 10th the enforcement of the 'no mooring' zones would begin. During this time we began the process of

taking the CRT to court in a Judicial Review. While notices and emails to desist were sent to boaters, hundreds remained defiant, many staying up to 14 days before being replaced by another resistant boater.

In the CRT notices left by DE they state that the boater is moored 'contrary to British Waterways Acts, Bye-laws, Conditions, Guidance etc'. To investigate what kind of legal standing CRT thinks they have, our solicitors asked them to qualify which specific Acts and Bye-laws relate to the 'no mooring' sites. Even when asked again by the solicitors, CRT failed to provide any Acts or Bye-laws to support their stance. They were unable to provide these because the CRT has no actual legal leg to stand on.

Our caseworkers have been providing boaters with replies to CRT enforcement letters around the clock. In response, CRT responses have been weak and defunctive. After one particular email exchange where we sought to clarify the CRT's stance in relation to the law, the officer ended one of their email with:

"Anyway, I'll leave it there for now. Feel free to get back to me if you have any other questions I won't be able to give a straight answer to."

This elusiveness hasn't been exclusive to the legal side of the campaign, CRT's public relations efforts regarding the matter are much the same. We have been successful in getting this campaign into wide range of press outlets. The CRT's defensiveness includes refusing to quantify how many mooring spaces are at risk. Additionally, the CRT have also spread untruths to the press, making ridiculous public statements such as that enforcing 'no mooring' sites does not have a negative impact on our community.

The boating community are continuing to resist the no moorings in the 'safety' zones implementation, yet CRT continues to waste money trying stop the resistance. The CRT can only afford to waste so much money and incur so much bad press before they are forced to defer to our position on these 'no mooring' spaces. However for CRT to back down it will take our community continue until CRT does.

# GENTRIFICATION OF LONDON WATERWAYS

## CRT's chargeable moorings policy will price boaters out

CRT would like to start charging 'extra' for Towpath Moorings. Normally your licence includes the right to moor on any towpath without extra charge. CRT would like to turn 1.1km of London's regular towpath into new 'Chargeable' Moorings that would cost an additional £84 extra a week. Why? Because CRT believes financially excluding people from these moorings will somehow make them 'fairer'. Boaters who can afford it will be able to reserve themselves a guaranteed mooring space, at the expense of less wealthy Boaters who will find their mooring opportunities significantly reduced.

In reality this would financially exclude many residential boaters without a home mooring from 1.1km of the mooring space they rely on for their livelihood. Much like every other CRT Policy, this prioritises Leisure Boating over Residential Boating - CRT have no actual adjustments in any of their strategies that actively support itinerant, residential boating. Perhaps there is a question here - do CRT believe that holidays are more important than homes? Most worrying of all, evidence suggests that these new chargeable moorings will often remain empty and unused.

CRT have conducted an online survey about their 'Chargeable Mooring' plans - unfortunately their survey is invalid for the following reasons:

CRT's survey is invalid because it claims a Pilot Chargeable Mooring Scheme they ran was a great success. In fact, it was only used 25% of the time - the rest of

the time it remained empty and unused.

CRT's survey is invalid because it is based on CRT creating new regular towpath moorings - to replace the ones being annexed off for wealthier boaters. A Freedom Of Information Request revealed that CRT does not know where these 'replacement' regular moorings will be. Historically CRT have promised many new mooring spaces that have not materialised - so if CRT do not know where these 'replacement' moorings will be, effectively they do not exist.

CRT's survey is invalid because it initially misinformed participants that only 40 regular towpath moorings would be lost to this 'Chargeable' mooring scheme. Due to another Freedom Of Information request they later had to amend these false figures mid-survey to 1.1km. This could amount to 120 regular mooring spaces being lost, so this survey was initially based on a false premise.

CRT's survey is invalid because it is filled with coercive questions that force



Map from <https://ontheworldmap.com/uk/city/london/london-waterways-map.jpg>

participants to suggestively agree to things they do not. The question 'How many times a year should you be allowed to moor on a Chargeable Mooring?' does not allow me to disagree with the whole concept in the first place - one can only hope that CRT does not 'cherry-pick' their data.

CRT's survey is invalid because when it suggests introducing a 'no widebeam double mooring' policy it misrepresents the facts. London's canals are some of the widest in the country. There are many places throughout London's canals where you can double moor onto a widebeam and leave an enormous amount of space for navigation. The impact

Location	Length of mooring / berths
Cowley North	50m
Kensal Green visitor mooring	300m
Little Venice visitor mooring	120m
Rembrandt Garden pre-book	50m
Paddington visitor mooring	100m
Paddington pre-book	6 berth
Camden visitor mooring	150m
Kings Cross Treaty Street visitor mooring	65m
Kings Cross North visitor mooring	25m
Kings Cross Goods Way visitor mooring	50m
Kings Cross Goods Way pre book	50m
Islington visitor mooring (eco mooring)	150m
Victoria Park visitor mooring	131m
Broadway Market visitor mooring	105m

of removing this double mooring capacity will be vast. Yet again - the survey is based on a false premise.

So where does that leave us? A poorly constructed, invalid survey about a poorly conceived scheme, based on falsehoods and prejudice. No Equality Impact Assessment to demonstrate how this will affect family/residential/disabled/older/financially disadvantaged boaters (CRT have promised to conduct one - but only once the scheme is effectively a done deal). Then there is the strange assertion that making something financially prohibitive will somehow make it fairer (- for whom?).

It feels like history is repeating itself. Yet another policy aimed at debilitating the Itinerant Boating Community, founded on a swamp of misinformation, without any form of proper consultation - in particular, no consultation with those it will impact the most. Surely in any proposal worth its salt you would conduct an Equality Impact Assessment before presenting it to the general public - otherwise you risk promoting discrimination... unless, of course, that is exactly what you intend to do.

And let's not lose sight of the door that is being opened - one where CRT can charge whatever it likes, for any towpath mooring, anywhere. This new CRT Policy could in fact be a step-by-step guide on how to make a public asset financially exclusive.

**KEY**

● Where CRT are planning to put chargeable moorings