



CRT ANNOUNCE ITINERANT BOAT DWELLERS WILL PAY HIGHER LICENCE FEES THAN OTHERS

Just before this newsletter went to press, the Canal and River Trust (CRT) announced that it plans to charge boats without home moorings more than boats with home moorings.

The implications of this are devastating. CRT will now be able to use boat licence fees as a way of removing the travelling boat dweller community from the waterways. It is more important than ever that we join together as a united community to stop CRT in their tracks. We will be sending round a ballot to all members of the NBTA to ask for your input on what action we take next. If you are not already a member, please sign up now to contribute to this vital decision. We have also organised an online meeting to coordinate our fight back. Please join us on Monday 9th October at 7pm. The access details for the meeting can be found on page 3. We hope to see you all there.

PARTIAL ENERGY GRANT VICTORY!

After great effort by the NBTA and other boating organisations, boaters without home moorings on Canal & River Trust waters will now finally receive the £600 winter energy grant.

Together, boaters have fought hard for our community and won a victory. However, many people - including itinerant boaters on non Canal & River Trust waters, many live-aboards with a leisure moorings, and those living itinerantly on land - remain excluded, despite the grant being promised to every household in the UK.



NBTA GETS COUNCIL TO PUT BOAT CLEANSING ON HOLD

Elmbridge council on people to challenge their plans. The Environmental Agency waterways is PSPO would have allowed the council to re-opening their consultation issue fines of up to £400 for mooring on regarding imposing a public space the Thames within Elmbridge for longer protection order on 'unauthorised' than 24 hours at a time. moorings after NBTA encouraged

RIVER LEA'S 'NO MOORING' ZONES ARE 'NOT NECESSARY' FINDS INDEPENDENT RISK ASSESSMENT

After CRT ignored repeated requests to provide evidence that boats moored in the 'Safety Zones' were a danger to navigation, NBTA-L commissioned its own independent assessment. The report, carried out by a qualified and experienced Risk Assessment professional, concluded at the three 'no mooring' sites examined that: 'Boats moored in this area cannot be considered an additional risk as they comply with national standard practice(...) Mooring restrictions at these sites are not necessary'.



It goes on to suggest that it's more important for craft - including row boats - to manage their speed effectively to avoid any potential incidents. This upholds NBTA's long held view that CRT's 'Safety Zone' policy has never been about safety, but aims instead to make life difficult for boaters, which could ultimately drive many off the water and out of their homes.

SAFETY ZONES COST QUARTER OF A MILLION

CRT admits to spending up to £250k trying to stop boaters from mooring in the 'Water Safety Zones' on the River Lea. A Freedom of Information request shows that as of 31 May 2023, the Trust has spent anything up to £249,680.09 in the two WSZs on the

Lower Lea at Hackney/Tottenham and at Broxbourne. All the while, trying to put licence fees up and divide the boating community. CRT should stop wasting money on preventing people mooring in these so-called 'Safety Zones'.

NBTA
Boats are Homes
National Barge Travellers Association

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

NEW CHARGEABLE MOORINGS REPLACING TOWPATH MOORING

In 2016, prior to launching the London Mooring Strategy, which was published in 2018, CRT and NBTA-London had round-the-table discussions about CRT's thoughts on "pre-bookable" moorings. NBTA made it explicitly clear that if there were any "pre-bookable" moorings to be created, then they should be on the offside, and that towpath moorings should never be chargeable.

Instead, CRT proceeded to make use of any vacant offside space not yet used for mooring for "long term", or

"residential" moorings, rather than increasing mooring space for visitors who were willing to book ahead, often making deals with third parties who owned the offside land.

Two such set of moorings are at Broadway Market on the Regent, which in particular impedes navigation in what was already a very busy part of the London network, whilst overlooking the opportunity to create "pre-bookable" moorings; the other being Matchmakers on the River Lea, where the installation of those moorings meant CRT with their 'safety' zones are trying to enforce a 'no mooring' site on the towpath.



Want to get more involved with NBTA London? We hold monthly meetings on the first 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#

Yet, this is taken from CRT's website:

“It's really important that navigation is maintained and that it's not impeded by moored boats. The inner London waterways are very busy with many different types of boater: liveaboard, leisure, freight, and business craft as well as increasing numbers of unpowered craft. This measure is intended to ensure that there is clear navigation for everyone in these busy areas.”

Their policy for safe navigation goes into the ether, however when it comes to the possibility of monetising new moorings, such as those on the offside at Broadway Market on the Regent.

Seven years following CRT's first discussions with NBTA, CRT have now taken away several “casual”, “visitor” or towpath moorings, making them “pre-bookable”, and furthermore, have started charging extra. Usually, a CRT licence includes the right to moor on any towpath without extra charge, but CRT are turning 1.1km of London's regular towpath into new ‘Chargeable’ Moorings that would cost an additional £25 extra a day. CRT's argument for doing so is to make it ‘fairer’ for part-time and full-time liveaboard boaters alike to have a chance of mooring up in popular parts of the canal network. When we checked the facts behind the manipulated CRT survey on how successful the Paddington Basin chargeable moorings are, a Freedom Of Information Request reveals that these



Little Venice now has chargeable moorings at £25 per day

moorings have only been used 25% of the time – the rest of the time they remained empty and unused.

The latest moorings to be eradicated from public, free-for-all use are in Little Venice and Paddington Basin, but this is just the beginning.

On reading the T&Cs for what CRT call “pre-bookable”, but are actually chargeable moorings, included in these T&Cs are “planned” eco moorings on the Regent at Kings Cross and on Sweetwater in the Olympic Park on the Lee Navigation, strongly implying that these eco moorings may also become chargeable. NBTA also infer from this that the existing eco moorings on the Regent at Angel may become chargeable too, not just “pre-bookable”.

Aside from being financially exclusive and therefore fundamentally unfair in the first place, the quantity of chargeable moorings is not proportionate to the needs of boat owners. Lots of these bookable, chargeable mooring spaces will either be paid for by boaters who can't find public towpath mooring since CRT have reduced those spaces, or they will remain empty because people a) can't afford them, and b) don't want them. If they remain largely empty, this may then be a great excuse for CRT to turn them into private moorings.

Meanwhile the Paddington Arm of the Grand Union canal at Little Venice has never looked emptier.