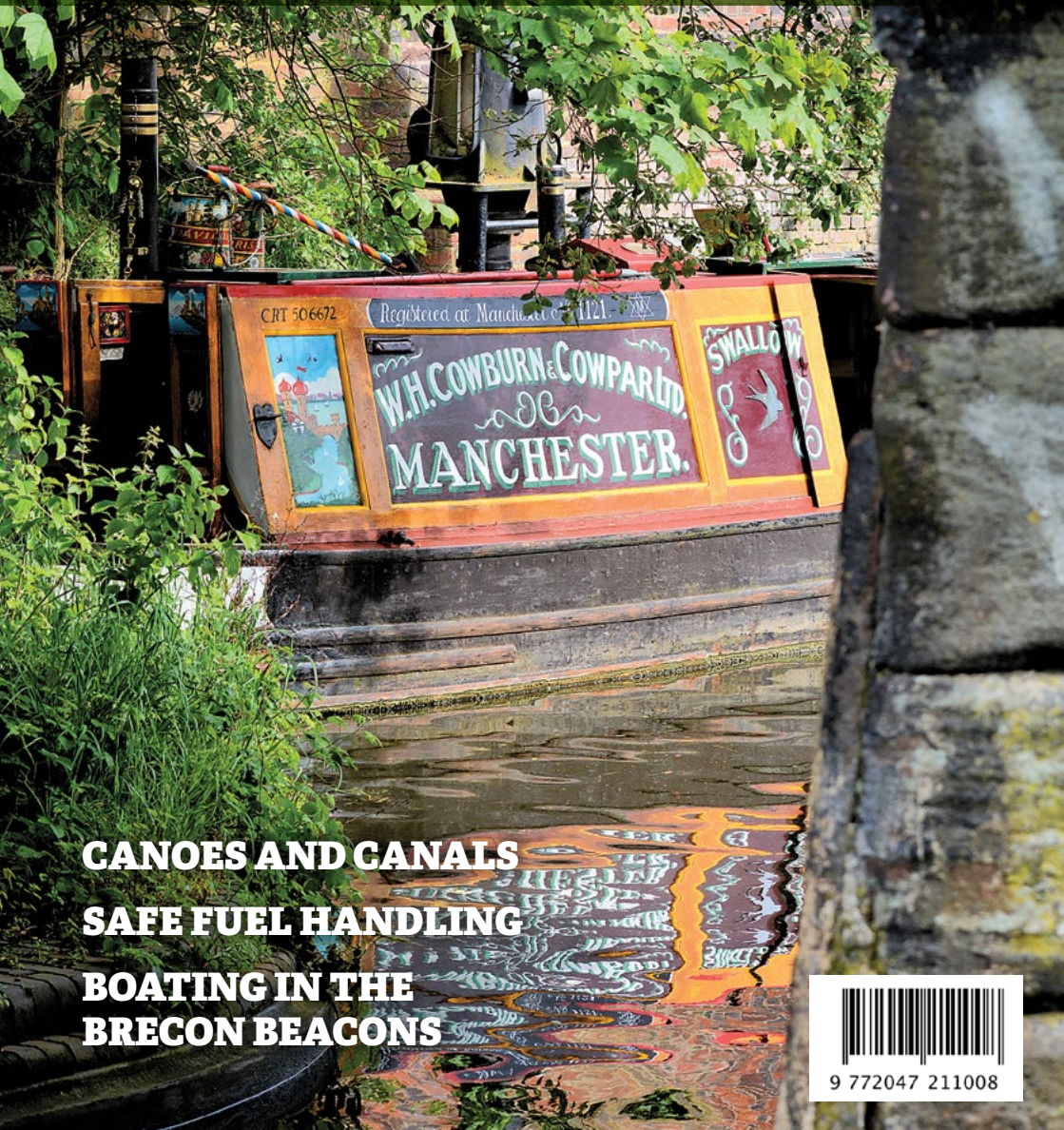




NABO News

The Magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners
Issue 4 July 2017



CANOES AND CANALS

SAFE FUEL HANDLING

**BOATING IN THE
BRECON BEACONS**



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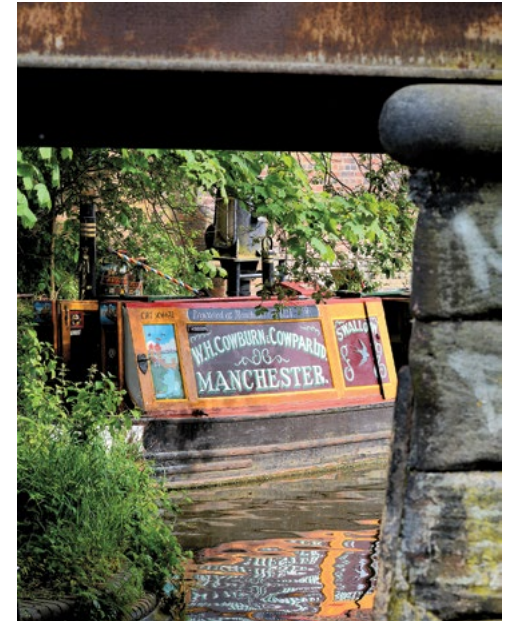
Issue 4 July 2017

Contents

- 4 Editorial
- 5 In the Chair
- 6 Fly on the wall
- 7 Membership Matters
- 8 Around the regions: North east waterways, Welsh waterways, West Midlands
- 10 News: Shroppie fishing matches, Falkirk Wheel, Long-term moorings enforcement
- 12 New rental licence, Canoeing on the Llangollen, Slowing cyclists, New route along Bow Back Rivers
- 14 Boating: Buswoman's holiday
- 17 CRT News: Boater survey results, Licence evasion
- 18 Techie corner: Care with combustibles
- 22 Talking Points: Canoes in locks and tunnels
- 26 Friends Reunited
- 27 Letters, I name this boat

Next NABO News copy date

Articles, letters, cartoons and photos are most welcome. Images and photos in JPEG format. Please email or post your contributions to nabonews@nabo.org.uk by **September 9th 2017**



Cover photo

This month's cover photo is Swallow at Engine Bridge, by Kevin Maslin. Win a year's free membership by having your photo selected for the front cover of NABO News. Please email photos as JPEG attachments, ideally portrait format with a file size of 2MB or larger.

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CRT Emergency No: 0800 4799947

EA Emergency No: 0800 807060

Contact CRT waterway managers at canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/our-regions



Canoeists feature more prominently in this issue than previously, with news of new canoe slipways on the Llangollen, the opening of Foulridge Tunnel on the L&L to canoeists, and problems with some canoeists wanting to share locks with boats. While NABO welcomes the increased use of the waterways by as many people as possible, its main concern in relation to canoeists is safety—it doesn't take much imagination to see who will come off worse in situations where a canoe and a 12-tonne boat are in too close proximity—such as a lock or a tunnel.

Coping with canoes

Editor **Peter Fellows** welcomes clarification by CRT

So it is welcome that Jon Horsfall, CRT's interim head of boating, has restated its policy on unpowered craft and has begun a process with British Canoeing to promote clear and straightforward information to increase awareness of what canoeists can and cannot do.

Although we have had occasional articles over the years on technical aspects of boating, I would like to print more, so I have introduced the first of a new series with a look at safety aspects of fuels on board. If you have specialist knowledge of any aspect of boat design, construction, equipment, facilities or maintenance, or just some handy technical tips that you've come across, please let me know. I've also repeated my

request in the last issue for cartoons and a crossword compiler, but I'm pleased to report that we will hopefully soon have a new 'Rewind' column in each issue.

Elsewhere, there are reports from three of NABO's regional reps; Howard Anguish in the North-east, Mike Rodd in Wales and Alison Tuck in the West Midlands. Mark Tizard has views on how boaters can be better 'friends' with CRT, which would be in the interests of both parties, and Helen Hutt recounts her first experience of boating along the Mon & Brec. Enjoy the summer (as I write this, I can't believe it's already midsummer). The next issue will be in October, so give me a wave if we pass on the north-west canals over the coming weeks.



Photo: Valley Girls WI



Hopefully you have all been enjoying the lovely weather; we got some painting done, although the disadvantage was that the paint was drying as we put it on. I do hope that wasn't all of our summer—we so deserve a decent summer in the north. My Mum is over from New Zealand at present; she grew up in Middlewich but as we cruised a little, she was amazed at the number and variety of boats on the Peak Forest Canal (I might be biased, but it is a very pretty canal with breathtaking views across the Peak District on the summit pound).

CRT has an emphasis on the licensing review and the London mooring strategy, which does not seem to be addressing the issue of the extra boats moving to London each year. NABO was disappointed to see that the licensing review is not even finished but CRT has introduced a new licence for rented boats. This would not appear to address the issue, as it requires boats to have a residential mooring and doesn't address landlords who rent out a boat without a home mooring, or the ones who ask tenants to buy a 1% share in a boat to circumvent the hire rule. I attended a meeting with CRT where we discussed the ongoing licensing review. There will be a further opportunity to give our views to CRT as we were informed that all boaters would be contacted. NABO will be represented in a further meeting in late July, so do contact me if you have views on this.

The EA/CRT merger was put on hold during the election and still no word on how the new Secretary of State, Michael Gove, will view it. I don't expect any results in the short term, however, due to the slim majority. I am sure there will be some fed-up faces in both organisations, but it would appear that this may be

more of a political football and it has been kicked into the long grass for the while.

Equality provision is something we also discussed: Sean Williams explained that they are getting referrals from both the Customer Services and Licensing Teams. I cannot emphasise enough the need to let Customer Services know if you require help; they can then contact your local Customer Service and

Summertime and the livin' is easy

Stella Ridgway is out enjoying the sun

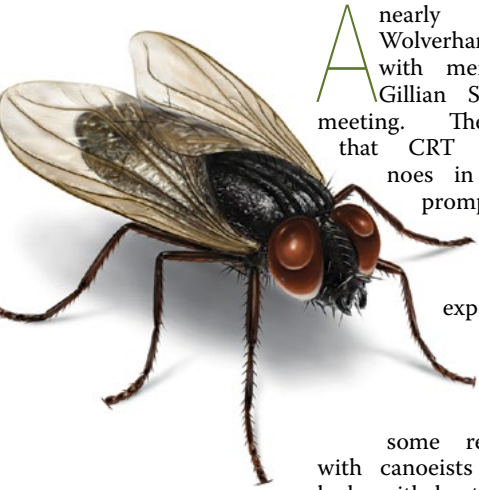
Support Officer (i.e. Enforcement), plus it is on record that you have contacted them. The Trust often engages local and national agencies to assist boaters in difficulty, but the emphasis is on you to contact them if you are having difficulties so that they can assist.

During this busy cruising time, we rely on our members to let CRT (and us) know if you see unpowered craft in locks. CRT has posted its guidelines again, advising that people should not be in unpowered craft in locks when they are filling or emptying. This follows a few incidents recently, after which NABO highlighted the safety aspects, particularly if children are present.

Finally; I do hope you enjoy the summer cruising and that you have a good summer. Our next Council meeting is in September and all are welcome to attend.

Fly on the wall

Observes proceedings at June's Council meeting



NABO calendar 2017

Council Meetings in 2017:
September 2nd, October
14th, November 11th
(includes AGM).

Council meetings are held at boat clubs in the Midlands area. The September meeting will be at the Wolverhampton Boat Club, Barnhurst Lane, Bilbrook, Wolverhampton, WV8 1RS (by boat, on the Shropshire Union, about one mile up from Atherley Junction). Members are welcome to attend Council meetings; please just let the Secretary or Chairman know in advance (contact details inside cover).

A nearly full house at Wolverhampton Boat Club with members Frank and Gillian Spragg joining the meeting. The announcement that CRT will permit canoes in Foulridge Tunnel prompted an extended discussion—seemingly everyone has had an experience of nearly squashing paddlers in tunnels and there have also been some recent contretemps with canoeists wanting to share locks with boats. The Council will seek clarification from CRT's Elf 'n Safety boss, as Council members and some waterways managers certainly see a problem. Everyone wants to see more people enjoying the waterways, but children in canoes can do unpredictable things, and tunnels and locks are highly dangerous places for them to be. It can only be a matter of time before a canoe either gets squished between a steel boat and a tunnel wall, or gets swamped in a deep lock while it is being filled.

The Trust's licensing review workshops are underway but many of the pre-selected boaters are not turning up, with only six of the fifteen invitees arriving at the Leeds meeting. Perhaps the organisers should issue more invitations to compensate for no-shows. And why has CRT introduced a new 'peer-to-peer' rental

licence in the middle of the consultation? The requirement to have a residential mooring means that the licence is unlikely to be taken up by many owners—especially in London where this type of mooring is rarer than a hen's tooth. The BSS is screening boat rental adverts, so that a hire-boat level safety examination can be made at the next renewal, but is CRT similarly monitoring them for incorrect boat licences?

A trial involving an enforcement company is underway in the South East, with penalty charges of £150 per day for 'trespassing' (i.e. staying) on CRT's 'Waterside Moorings' without permission. This follows a similar trial by the EA on the Thames, which seems to have got boats moving. No-one likes serial over-stayers and everyone on the Council could point to such boaters, but £150 seems a bit steep. Does this

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reflect the true cost of enforcement? And is CRT outsourcing enforcement because its enforcement officers are now 'Customer Support Officers'? Clearly, it is in the commercial interest of the enforcement company to catch as many over-stayers as possible, so will this be extended to 48-hour visitor moorings and even 14-day towpath moorings? Is this how people want to see the waterways evolve?

The consultation on air pollution caused by smoke and diesel fumes has identified stove smoke from moored boats as an issue in a few built-up areas, but boat diesel engines are an insignificant part of the problem—so it is unlikely that a proposed scrappage scheme for old diesels will apply to your vintage Listers, Gardners, Bolinders and Russell Newberrys!

CRT is addressing 2500 complaints about lack of dredging and will identify where and how much is needed. There remain problems with offside vegetation causing blocked lines of sight, but towpath inspectors cannot identify these, so CRT doesn't know where they are. It is up to boaters to tell them.

Payment issues

The current membership team has been in place for three years, and we see the benefit of sharing the workload and using a common, web-based database. We work largely online and this fits in well with individual boating travels and working when it suits us. If we send you a renewal notice, all we ask is that you read and respond to it, particularly if your address, phone, email or circumstances have changed.

We are finalising the move away from our Santander account, and this has enabled us to stop payments from former members who have moved on without telling us and failed to cancel their standing orders. A big thank you to all members who have helped with this. Please remember that if you pay by standing order and you resign your membership, it is up to you to cancel the payments. We will remind you, but if you move address and do not tell us, there is nothing that we can do. Any payments are then treated as donations.

Most members pay by standing order. If you do not, please consider it. Sending cheques may

CAN YOU HELP NABO?

Here at NABO News, I would welcome some more help from members: do you have skills as a cartoonist or a crossword compiler? I would also welcome more cover photos, especially autumn and winter on the waterways. NABO Council has a few vacancies that it would also like to fill: we need a Minute's Secretary and reps for Anglian Waters and the River Severn—can you help?

CALLING FLOATING TRADERS

If you are a floating trader and a NABO member, I would be pleased to include an article on your business in a future issue of NABO News. Please let me know how and why you started trading, what you sell and how people can contact you. A couple of separate, high-quality photos would also be good to illustrate the article.

be convenient to you, but we have to handle them and bank them. It gets done as and when and this can take several weeks. Electronic payments are safe and immediate—so more time boating! These days, most new members use PayPal, because it's online, there and then. This is great, and easy on our administration; but the only downside is that it costs us about £1 per payment. Is there a chance that you could change to a standing order?

We appreciate that members sell their boats and go ashore, it's part of the normal cycle of membership. Please tell us if this applies to you. If you continue to receive NABO News after your renewal date, it is a sure indication that we are hoping and expecting you will renew. We do not stop sending the newsletter for a couple of months in case have missed the renewal notice. Let us know; it saves our work writing again, incurring the postage and checking.

Finally, we can always use help. If you have basic computer skills and a few hours a week, we would love to hear from you.

Thank you for all your assistance and all the best from the Membership Team.

North East Waterways Howard Anguish



The latest Local Waterway Forum in Castleford on 16th May was a well-attended forum this time with a few new faces. The meeting was chaired by Mike Marshall who is in charge of the NE region while the Manager, Jon Horsfall, is acting as the interim Head of Boating. Mike is a regular at these meetings, usually leading on the engineering and technical issues, and he started by announcing that there

Around the regions with NABO's regional reps

would be a different style to this meeting because he was conscious that, in the recent past, there had been little chance for audience participation in Q&As to CRT staff. Consequently, there was a brief update on a few matters of local interest, in particular the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme. We had been told at the autumn forum that there would be a couple of major stoppages in 2017, which would disrupt boating plans for many river and canal users in the area. After discussions over the winter, Mike was able to tell us that these plans had been revised and there was now to be only one stoppage over the last two weeks of July. However, he did say that he had had a call from Leeds City Council, just before leaving for the forum, that this might be delayed

by two weeks. CRT will be seeking clarification and updating everyone shortly.

We had an interesting presentation from Stuart McKenzie, the CRT Harbour Master for the local rivers, who had been working on a better way of presenting river water level information on a continuous basis, rather than the present method which relies on issuing a number of updating notices. The method that he has developed will be updated continually on-line, presently by input from CRT staff, but hopefully this will be augmented by Supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) input. The displayed information will also include enhanced navigational information status, together with any planned action. The system will go live in the next few weeks and I will give an update when I have had the chance to see it running live. The CRT SCADA team are also working on a nationwide parallel scheme that will rely totally on automated input from SCADA data at each lock.

Nearly all local CRT staff had taken part in Customer Excellence Training because it was felt in some quarters that this had been neglected in recent years. The rest of the meeting was spent on what was described as 'speed dating'. There were six tables set up with CRT staff at each table who were able to speak on a variety of disciplines: two tables for customer operations to cover local waterways; one for customer operations involving rivers and tidal operations; an engagement, events and volunteering table; one table for asset management; and one concerning operational contracts.

During three 30-minute sessions, we were asked to visit three different tables each and to talk about any issues that may be of interest. Understandably, most discussions involved local issues, with the exception of Richard Delves, the Boating Business Manager, who tried to engage his table with a discussion about the current licence consultation. However, I have to say that there did not seem to be much enthusiasm to engage in this subject; rather the main thrust of the discussion was about how some CRT telephone responders seemed to be less than knowledgeable of waterways issues and locations!

A final comment; there was virtually no national news given out at this meeting, which is certainly a departure from previous forums. The only exception was a reminder that the winter



Talybony Lift-Bridge
Photo: talybontonusk.com

stoppage programme was out for consultation and comments and we were urged to have a look at the first round that was published recently.

Welsh Waterways Mike Rodd



While the Welsh Government-supported winter work on the Mon & Brecon has been most welcome, it is disappointing to see that the extensive work on the vital lift-bridge at Talybont has resulted in failures twice in the last few weeks. Likewise, the pumpout out at Brecon (the only CRT pumpout on the canal) has failed yet again. Otherwise, it is brilliant to see that most hire companies are doing well and the support they receive from the CRT 'Lockies' is welcomed.

On the K&A, there seem to be more bridge and lock failures than before. And, as has been reported before, the number of canoes and kayaks who seem to believe they can use some of the most dangerous locks on the system has led to

NABO officially raising the matter with the CRT director responsible. CRT's policy is clear, but obviously not being applied—even by some CRT volunteer lockkeepers.

West Midlands Alison Tuck



All the summer stoppages have been completed and the Wyrley and Essington is open at Pinfold Bridge. I heard that there was some trouble with a gang of teenagers throwing stones at boaters during the BCN Challenge; police have been informed. There is an issue of tyres being illegally dumped at the bottom of Garrison Flight on the BCN. CRT and the Council are taking action to catch the fly-tippers. Community Roots is a CRT-funded project, doing graffiti projects along the BCN, working with artists and schools. They have also planted an urban orchard along the towpath from Birmingham city centre down the Aston flight.

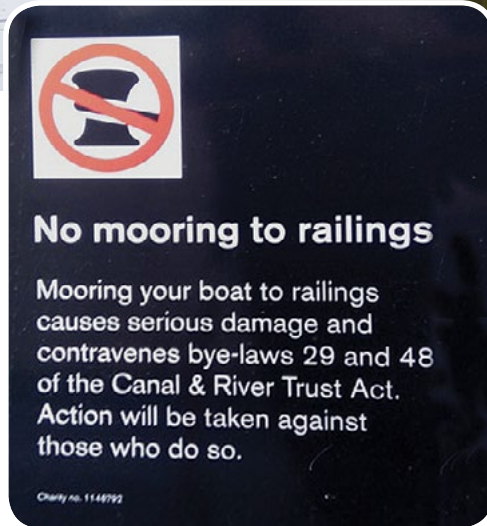


Update on Shroppie fishing competition

The national angling championships that take place on Saturday 19th August on the Shropshire Union Canal will occupy 15 miles of towpath. These sections will be excluded from the match and are available for overnight moorings on Friday evening or during the day on Saturday:

- South of bridge 42
- Shebdon Aqueduct moorings area
- Bridge 45 and approx. midway between bridge 46 bridge 47
- Near winding hole at bridge 48
- Bridge 55 north for around 200 metres
- Bridge 56 to Tyrley Locks
- Tyrley locks to Bridge 64 at Market Drayton
- South side of Betton Wood bridge for approx. 150 metres
- Midway between Bridge 68 and 69 north to Adderley Locks
- Adderley Lock Flight
- Adderley bottom lock to approx. 150 metres south of Hawksmoor bridge 72
- Bridge 74 to Audlem Top Lock
- Audlem Lock Flight
- North of Audlem Lock Flight to midway between bridge 79 and 80

On the day of the match, the event organisers, Angling Trust, will have four stewards in each section. Further information, contact Dave Watkins at dgwatkins@sky.com.



New Act?

Signs that have appeared on London's waterways seem to show that CRT's sign-making department is making up legislation as it goes along. There is no such thing as a 'Canal & River Trust Act' and hence no 'Bye-laws 29 and 48' to contravene. CRT's Boating Manager for London said: "We're finding out what's happened here—it looks like there was some confusion in the drafting, which we're going to correct."

from www.thefloater.org/the-floater-june-2017

Photo:Alec Wood

Long-term moorings enforcement

CRT is trialling a long-term moorings enforcement process at 16 Waterside Mooring sites. The contractor, District Enforcement, will target boaters who refuse to move from their mooring after a Waterside Mooring agreement has expired or has been terminated by the Trust, or where boats without a mooring agreement are staying on a Waterside Mooring berth and refusing to move.

Although the extent of the problem is not clear, any offending boat owners will be notified and given 48 hours to move the boat. If they fail to move the boat, they will be issued with a Mooring Overstay Charge Notice for being in breach of the conditions on the sign. The charge will be £150 per day, with a 50% discount if it is paid within 14 days. If boaters do not pay within 28 days or challenge the charge within 14 days, District Enforcement will notify the owner of its intention to pursue the matter through the Small Claims Court. The approach is based on the Environment Agency model, using the private parking industry to apply overstay charges on moorings on the Thames and CRT says that it is intended to deter, rather than punish, overstayers.

Falkirk Wheel plans deferred

Scottish Canals have put the proposals in the 'Rotate' project to convert one of the caissons on the Falkirk Wheel to a passenger platform on hold 'for the next few years'. The Wheel, which is 15 years old this year, is one of Scotland's top visitor attractions, but Scottish Canals faced almost universal criticism when it announced the proposals. It has decided that, although Rotate remains part of its plans 'to refresh the customer experience', it is now 'committed to ensuring that our customers are involved in the development of this project once we are in a position to progress'.



Waterside Mooring is the new name for the 3500 long-term, permanent moorings managed by CRT across England and Wales.

The small print on the signboard says: 'This land is privately owned by the Trust. District Enforcement have the Trust's authority to issue mooring overstay charge notices (MOCN) and to recover the overstay charges from the person or persons in control of the vessel. The trust will provide District Enforcement with any information it holds in its records relating to the vessel to enable recovery of the overstay charges by District Enforcement. District Enforcement is authorised to take full debt recovery action if overstay charges are not paid. If a MOCN is issued, and the person or persons in control of the vessel do not remove the vessel from this location, the Trust may authorise District Enforcement to take possession of the vessel for the purpose of moving it to any other part of the waterway as instructed by the Trust.'

New rental licence

In June, CRT introduced a new 'Static Letting' licence for rented boats at the same price as a self-drive hire-boat. It covers all types of boat rentals, long-term renting and Airbnb-style short breaks. Owners need a permanent mooring and should check if planning permission is needed. The licence requires boat owners to provide a detailed handover document, including emergency procedures and contact numbers, and fully brief potential renters. Owners also require adequate insurance, a non-private BSC, a landlord's gas safety certificate and written permission to hire the boat from their mooring provider. The aim is to ensure that boat owners meet their responsibilities to ensure that the tenants are safe.

CRT also has a new process for dealing with owners who breach the terms of their private owner's licence by renting their boat. When a boat is suspected of being rented out without the correct licence, the licence holder will be given 28 days to clarify the situation and a letter will be posted onto the boat to alert the tenants. The owner then has the option to cease trading or apply for a static letting licence. If neither is done the licence will be revoked.

Further information: canalrivertrust.org.uk/renting-a-boat-to-live-on



Canoeing on the Llangollen

A new canoe guide and three new slipways have been created by CRT in Wales, funded by Natural Resources Wales and public donations to CRT. Two slipways are at the top of the canal close to the Horseshoe Falls, and a third is opposite the Llangollen Pavilion near the town centre, for use by organised groups by advance agreement. A free canoe guide: 'Paddle the right way' is available from the CRT website and the Trevor Basin visitor centre.

Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site
 EXPLORE 11 miles of stunning heritage – 2 countries, 2 tunnels and 2 aqueducts.
 The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site extends along the Llangollen canal from Chirk through to Llansillo across the Dee Valley. Canoeing is a fantastic way to discover and admire a unique, picturesque landscape of aqueducts, viaducts and long tunnels. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct itself is one of the most amazing engineering feats on the canal network, a cast iron trough supported by giant stone pillars 39 metres (127 feet) above the River Dee. Find out more information at www.canalrivertrust.org.uk or www.pontcysyllte-aqueduct.co.uk

About us
 The Canal & River Trust is here so you have a place to escape. A place where you can step off the pavement onto the towpath and breathe. We are entrusted to care for 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales.
 From improving towpaths and creating new wildlife habitats to maintaining our distinctive infrastructure we are constantly working to make our waterways the best they can be.
 Many people don't realise that our waterways are only here thanks to the efforts of thousands of volunteers and generous donations that you give.
 Get involved and become a friend of the Canal and River Trust.
 Visit. Donate. Volunteer

More efforts to slow cyclists

As part of its 'share the space, drop your pace' campaign, CRT is installing '3D sleeping policeman' on selected towpaths, with messages on the ground saying 'no need to rush, just relax' or 'slow down and look around, it's nice here'. It has also produced a video targeted at cyclists and runners, showing why 'towpaths aren't the place to get your running or cycling personal best' NABO commented: Why not charge cyclists £150 if they do not obey the sign, reduced to £75 for prompt payment?



New route along Bow Back Rivers

CRT and the London Legacy Development Corporation have re-developed the stretch of Bow Back Rivers that runs through the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Previously, the rivers in this part of the East End were almost unnavigable, subject to tides, with a build-up of silt and full of fly-tipped rubbish, which saw them decline until they were largely closed in the 1960s.

The three-mile 'stadium island loop' of waterways around the London Stadium, which includes the Old River Lea, City Mill River and St. Thomas Creek, will open for cruising without the need for prior booking. There will be occasional closures as part of security requirements for high-profile events in the Park, but boaters can get notification in advance via CRT's stoppage notifications and notices on site.

There are also plans to create a 100-metre



stretch of short-stay visitor moorings on the Lee Navigation near the Hertford Union Canal. Some of the new moorings will be free for up to 48 hours, and others will be pre-bookable for up to seven days at a cost of £10 per night. These moorings will be available by the end of the year, but there will be no mooring within the Olympic Park itself. From the autumn, Waterworks River and Three Mills Wall River, which runs adjacent to the loop, will be opened to navigation via Carpenters Road Lock.

A booking system will be trialled over the summer, with the full launch after the East London Waterways Festival on 28th August. Further information, tinyurl.com/y9lgot04.

Buswoman's holiday

Helen Hutt has a glorious week on the Monmouth & Brecon Canal

After cruising the Scottish canals last year, my friends and I looked for another waterway that we couldn't access with our own boats, and came up with the beautiful Monmouth and Breconshire Canal. With some guidance and tips from NABO's former chairman, Mike Rodd, who keeps his own boat there, we opted to hire a 50-foot narrowboat from Castle Boats—a family run firm with a fleet of ten craft of different lengths, including two electric boats.

The Mon & Brecon is a narrow canal, but not quite as we know it! Its locks (six functioning, another 50-odd either under restoration or derelict, and all very deep) are about two feet wider than usual and the sloping canal banks would make mooring difficult for a 'normal' narrowboat with vertical sides and flat bottom. Hence boats were designed

specifically for this canal with a width of 8ft 6in and V-shaped bottoms.

Nowadays, even at its fullest, the canal is shallow, making progress much slower than usual. Overall I reckon we barely averaged two mph. But hey! Who cares when there is so much fantastic scenery and canal history to enjoy.

For most of its length, the Mon & Brecon is a contour canal, perched high up on the hillside overlooking the Usk Valley and the mountains beyond. It's heavily wooded, with many ancient oaks along the towpath, planted when the canal was built to stabilise the embankment; and we found some unusual species—such as a giant *Wellingtonia*—planted by George Everest, the botanist after whom the world's highest mountain is named.

All these trees and the River Usk,

which accompanied us most of the way, provide an auditory wonderland for bird lovers; during our week we spotted or heard 50 species, including a cuckoo, dippers, redstart, sandpiper and sparrow hawk.

For those keen on canal history and engineering, there are lime kilns galore, aqueducts, abandoned sideponds like those at The Bratch and wharves, such as Goytre, which have been sympathetically renovated with guide-boards to provide a glimpse into the past.

We picked up our boat at Gilwern, near Abergavenny, and boated south as far as Pontypool, by which time the going had become really slow so we walked the remaining two miles of navigable canal to Five Locks Basin and another mile on to Cwmbran, passing 15 'dead' locks on the way; there are another 15 between here and Newport.

A few of these 30 locks have been restored and have new gates, controversially but sensibly made of metal, including a couple with hinged balance beams to cater for towpath traffic. Just north of Newport another (mostly unnavigable) branch leads westwards to Pontywaun via the famous Fourteen Locks Flight, now a designated ancient monument with a visitor centre and café near the top. We walked up here on arrival day, before collecting our boat.

Heading north again from Pontypool, we were by this time longing for working locks and eventually we were rewarded by the Llangynidr Flight of five and, a couple of miles before Brecon, the single Brynich Lock. Mike had recommended an overnight stop near here, by Brynich Aqueduct, and it certainly didn't disappoint. With the Usk babbling below and beautiful views of the Brecon Beacons, who could ask for more? The only other 'obstacles' en route were a couple of



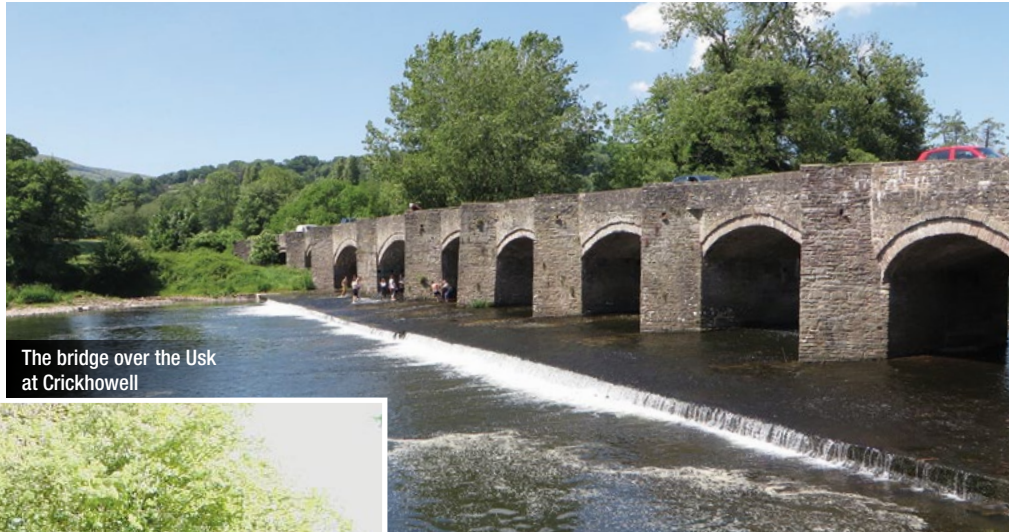
Nature reserve at Fourteen Locks
All photos: Helen Hutt



Hinged balance beam



The crew at Five Locks



The bridge over the Usk at Crickhowell



Lock awaiting restoration

lift-bridges, including Talybont hydraulic lift bridge (which thankfully waited to break down a week later), and the unbelievably low and narrow, but thankfully short, Ashford Tunnel—a mini Standedge.

Brecon itself provided a fitting terminus with good moorings in the basin and everything you could ask of an old market town, especially splendid ice creams! Although there are barely 36 miles of navigable water and six locks, a week was hardly enough to do it justice. The towpath is in excellent condition throughout, and there are plenty of waymarked footpaths leading off into the hills or down into the valley, just inviting you to leave the boat for a while and explore.

Last word: the old adage about Welsh rain is a fallacy. Official! At least it was for us. Our weather throughout was glorious; after a drizzly start on arrival day, the sun came out and stayed out. I even had to buy a sun hat, something I've never bothered with before.

Ellen Dexter commented:

I too holidayed for four days on the Mon and Brec at Easter, on a hire-boat from Castle Narrowboats for six family and friends. While I am 'between boats', I am taking the opportunity to hire boats on canals I wouldn't otherwise get to, and share the experience with more friends and family than I could comfortably fit on a private boat. We all thought the Mon and Brec was stunning and will definitely be going back. I was also interested to read Mike's comments that the off-side vegetation removal had external funding; the amount of work done was seriously impressive.

Boater satisfaction increase

CRT's latest Boat Owners' Views Survey was sent to a third of licence holders (1,160 respondents) by research consultancy, BDRC Continental, in March and April 2017. Although the full survey results have yet to be released, a summary shows that 76% said they were happy with their cruising experience (68% in 2016) and the number of boaters who would recommend the Trust's waterways to others increased by a similar amount to 78% (69% in 2016). Boaters in Wales & Borders were most satisfied and those in London were least satisfied. London was also the waterway where the fewest boaters would recommend the waterway to others (39%).

There have been small increases in numbers of boaters who feel they know the charity better (57% compared to 48% in 2016) and are more favourable towards the Trust (59% compared to 54% in 2016), while the number of boaters who trust CRT to look after the waterways is almost static (63% in 2016, 65% this year). Likewise, opinions about the overall upkeep of the waterways are virtually unchanged with 77% of boaters rating them OK to excellent (75% in 2016).

Jon Horsfall, interim head of boating commented: "The survey findings help us focus on

the issues that matter most to boaters. For example, this year we're planning on spending £26.9m on dredging and repairs to bridges and embankments. Dredging is planned at sites including the Macclesfield, Chesterfield, Lancaster and Grand Union, with a fund set aside for spot dredging. We're also going to be spending £17.4m on other works, including replacing 180 lock gates with a focus on the West Midlands, South East and Manchester & Pennine regions. Your feedback has played an important part in determining this work."

The survey aims to contact the majority of licence holders in each three-year cycle and the full results of this year's survey will be published on the CRT website.

What do you think about volunteer lockies?
 CRT has commissioned a Volunteer Lock-keeper Impact Survey to get people's views on how useful and helpful they are. The survey runs until October 31st and can be completed online at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/VLKuserimpact2017

Licence evasion

CRT has published its annual national boat count, which shows that licence evasion is down by 0.7% in the last year to 3.7%; the eighth year that the rate has stayed below 5%. In 2016/17 CRT removed 101 boats that were either unlicensed or in breach of its terms and conditions. The national boat count also shows the changing numbers of boats across the country, with London seeing an increase of 339 boats (over 9%), and numbers in the Central East, South West and South East regions also rising. Boat numbers in the North, North Wales and Midlands have seen a slight drop.

These figures make interesting reading compared to the EA statistics. Whereas CRT removed 101 boats last year, it prosecuted none

	Evasion (%)	CRT Licences issued		
		2016	2017*	% change
Central East	2.5	4876	5055	3.7
London	5.5	3662	4001	9.3
North	5.0	6679	6628	-0.8
NW & Midlands	3.6	4421	4407	-0.3
South East	1.4	6304	6448	2.3
South West (inc K&A)	4.9	4016	4138	3.0
Total	3.7	29,958	30,677	2.4

* Another 3,446 boats are in marinas that do not require a CRT licence, making the total number of boats 34,123

of them. The EA has removed 17 boats from its waterways under similar legislation, but has successfully prosecuted nearly 260 cases of licence evasion in the last six years. It seems that the EA is focussed on maximising revenue whereas CRT is focussed on maximising boat movement.'

Aspects of boat design, construction, equipment, facilities or maintenance

Care with combustibles

Peter Fellows offers some advice on staying healthy and safe

Burning wood and the use of boat stoves are both exempt from regulations under the Clean Air Act.

Artificial Logs

www.penntree.co.uk/product/hotblocks,
www.verdorenawables.co.uk/products/briquettes

eastyorkshirehemp.co.uk/hemp-briquettes.html

Stoves certified for use in smoke control zones

www.stovax.com/smoke-control-areas/stoves-smoke-control-areas

Solid fuels

Being an ex-pipe smoker, I like the smell of wood-smoke from the stoves of moored boats as I drift past on an autumnal day. And because of a little expertise in food smoking, I know that the relatively low combustion temperatures (around 300–400 °C) in wood-burning stoves cause maximum retention of the chemical compounds that produce desirable aromas in wood smoke. Smoke from



hardwoods, such as oak, beech or chestnut, or aromatic woods, such as apple or cherry, all have distinctive aromas.

These aromas are due to more than 400 volatile chemicals (ethers, aldehydes, esters, ketones etc.), which can produce sweet, flowery, fruity, spicy, pungent phenolic or clove-like aromas. Woods from different tree species have different amounts of these components and hence have different aromas when burned. But some softwoods, especially pine and fir, contain resins that produce unpleasant compounds when burned.

However, other ingredients in smoke, including nitrogen oxides, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), phenolic compounds, tar, carbon monoxide and dioxide, are

each potentially harmful. Likewise, boaters who glean anything combustible to put in their stoves can produce a whole range of other unpleasant emissions. The current ongoing review of air quality in major towns and cities has, for the first time, identified smoke from boat stoves as a source of nuisance, if not harm, in a couple of locations (notably in Islington, where the canal is surrounded by high buildings that can reduce smoke dispersal).

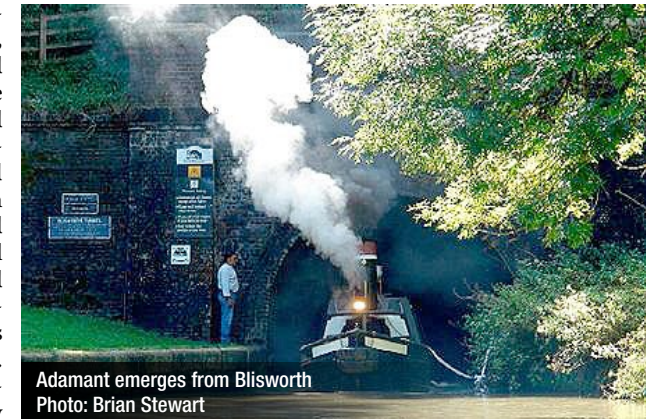
So if, for whatever reason, you want to reduce the smoke from your boat stove, there are a range of options available. Select a smokeless fuel according to price and convenience. Smokeless coal or anthracite both have a higher bulk density than wood and hence takes up less storage space; and bags are easier to handle and stack than are logs.

If you don't have the time or inclination to find dead trees to saw up, season until sufficiently dry, and store on the cabin roof, there are a range of alternative wood-based or wood-like fuels, including briquette 'logs' made from compressed wood-chips or vegetable fibres such as hemp. Alternatively, if you would like to continue burning your usual fuel, smokeless stoves are designed to introduce pre-heated, secondary air into the firebox that burns the hydrocarbon particles in smoke. This can greatly increase the combustion efficiency and dramatically reduce the amount of smoke going up the chimney, which in turn can reduce servicing costs and save fuel. The stoves are certified as suitable for use in smoke-control zones. Similarly, diesel-burning stoves or central heating boilers also produce very little smoke.

Whatever fuel or stove type you select, avoid the risk of poisoning yourself, your crew and pets, from carbon monoxide (CO) inhalation by ensuring that the stove is well-maintained and no gases or smoke can escape into the cabin space from either the stove or flue. Fit both CO and smoke detectors (see NABO News Issue 5, 2016).

LPG

In contrast to handling and using solid fuels, liquefied propane or butane falls within the BSS examination, due to its greater volatility and risk of causing a fire or explosion. It is not just common sense, but also a legal requirement under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (GSIUR) that you should employ a (LPG boats-competent) Gas Safe registered engineer to carry out any work on the LPG system on your boat. Under the scope of the GSIUR, the definition of 'work' also includes a 'LPG tightness



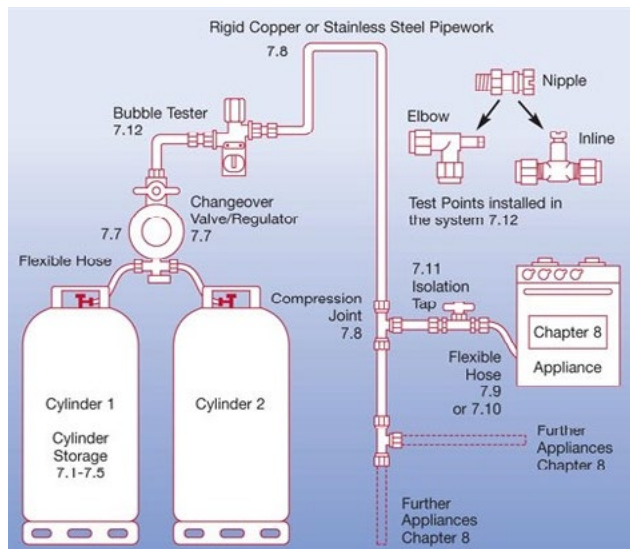
Adamant emerges from Blisworth
Photo: Brian Stewart

MYSTERIOUS DEATH IN A CANAL TUNNEL

An extraordinary circumstance occurred early on Saturday morning in the Blisworth Tunnel, near Northampton, through which passes the Grand Junction Canal. A man named Smith was working a boat for Mr W E Clark, a wharfinger, of Fenny Stratford, and it was as usual being drawn through the tunnel by a steam tug. When near the end, the man in charge of the tug noticed an unaccountable jerking of the boat, and on returning along the path to ascertain the cause found that the man Smith was dead. Death was caused, it is supposed, by suffocation, the atmosphere in the tunnel being exceedingly dense, particularly during the early morning, and this density is intensified by the smoke from the tug.

Birmingham Daily Post, March 9th 1885

test' carried out as part of the BSS examination of private boats. The test checks that the gas system is free from leaks (i.e. the gas tightness) and involves a BSS examiner who is Gas Safe registered using a manometer on a screw nipple gas test point (a threaded opening in the gas system, sealed by a screw nipple). Examiners who are not Gas Safe registered can only complete the check if a bubble tester is fitted, or by observing the manometer test being conducted by a (LPG boats-competent) Gas Safe registered installer. Obviously,



The numbers refer to the chapters and sections in the BSS Examination Checking Procedures, found at www.boatsafetyscheme.org/media/268789/ecp-private-boats-ed3_rev2_apr2015_public_final.pdf

BSS for residential boats

www.boatsafetyscheme.org/boat-examination/boats-with-gas/residential-liveaboard-craft-and-houseboats

BSS for boats used for business

2017: www.boatsafetyscheme.org/boat-examination/hire-boats
2002: www.boatsafetyscheme.com/site/2002nonprivateonline_14.asp

Other BSS information about the use of LPG on boats can be found by visiting www.boatsafetyscheme.org

the system should be gas-tight (not leaking) at all times, and not just for the BSS examination. For boat owners, the simplest way of having that assurance is to install a bubble tester and use it routinely.

However, it gets more complicated because the use of a boat affects its status under the gas legislation. Examiners who are not on the Gas Safe register are advised to ask in advance about the status of the craft. The examiner must be (LPG boats-

competent) Gas Safe registered if the boat is used primarily for residential purposes—i.e. liveaboard craft and houseboats (it makes no difference if the boat is owner-occupied or rented-out)—or if it is hired out, or if people are invited on board the boat in the course of a business (e.g. is it a café or shop). Details of the BSS examination of boats for residential and domestic use are given at www.boatsafetyscheme.org/boat-examination/boats-with-gas/residential-liveaboard-craft-and-houseboats.

The BSS examination also includes checks on the storage of gas cylinders and the connections to gas appliances. The diagram shows the BSS requirements for a boat's LPG system (the numbers refer to the chapters and sections in the BSS Examination Checking Procedures, found at www.boatsafetyscheme.org/media/268789/ecp-private-boats-ed3_rev2_apr2015_public_final.pdf). Before an examination, prepare the boat to ensure that there is a supply of gas for the examiner to undertake the checks, and that the LPG cylinder locker is accessible (remove all loose portable items, base protection mats, false floors etc. for temporary



Bubble tester - a highly recommended installation



Follow manufacturer's operating instructions.

removal of LPG cylinders).

If your boat is a hire-boat, a third-party managed share-owned boat, a trip-boat, a rented residential boat, or a floating business, the boat will be examined to either the 2017 Hire Boat Requirements (www.boatsafetyscheme.org/boat-examination/hire-boats) or the 2002 BSS Standards (www.boatsafetyscheme.com/site/2002nonprivateonline_14.asp) as stipulated by the navigation authority that registered your boat.

Petrol and diesel

Just as flammable as LPG, petrol may be used in outboard engines on cruisers, or in portable generators (LPG engines and generators are also available, but not widely used on inland waterways boats). BSS examinations of petrol and diesel engines cover all aspects of fuel storage and use and, provided that they are correctly installed, these fuels are unlikely to pose a danger to boaters. However, while the levels of exhaust smoke and gases from boat engines have not been found to contribute in any significant way to urban air pollution, I cannot be the only boater who

has suffered from noxious fumes in a long tunnel at the end of a busy day, or from following a boat with a poorly maintained engine. For diesel engines, simply keep them serviced and well-maintained and there should be no issues of smoky exhausts until they are very long in the tooth indeed.

Fumes from both engines and generators can be extremely dangerous. If you smell engine exhaust fumes inside the cabin or a covered deck area, stop the engine, and get out immediately—you may not have the leeway you might expect to escape the threat of carbon monoxide. Petrol engines produce an exhaust with a CO concentration of about 50,000 parts per million (ppm)—and 1,000 ppm will kill you.

Engine or generator exhaust fumes can blow back and fill the cabin space with deadly levels of the gas within seconds. Marine Accident Investigation Branch reports over the last two decades show that at least 19 boaters have died and another 24 have required medical attention at hospital after inhaling CO in exhaust gases (www.gov.uk/maib-reports).

To avoid the risks:

- Run portable generators ashore and away from the boat, never on board in the cratch or on the counter.
- Don't run an engine when moored if the exhaust fumes are blowing back inside, even if your batteries need charging. Wait until the wind changes or move to a different mooring.
- Don't run petrol generators where exhaust fumes could enter a nearby boat cabin.
- Install a CO alarm, certified to the BS EN 50291-2 standard, test it routinely and never remove the batteries.

Other BSS information can be found at www.boatsafetyscheme.org and searching for 'Outboard and portable combustion engines and portable fuel systems'.



Filling petrol containers safely
www.youtube.com/watch?v=43X8H7ekklw

Thames locks have always allowed in unpowered boats—skiffs in Boulter's Lock, Windsor, on a Sunday afternoon in 1895, by E J Gregory



Canoes in locks and tunnels

What are the rules?

Back in May, Mike Rodd, Chairman of the Hungerford Branch of the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust contacted NABO: “Once again I have to report a problem with canoes. As we were entering Dunmill Lock with the Rose of Hungerford, a couple of very lightweight kayaks approached us (a youngish dad and a five- or six-year old boy) and insisted that they joined us in the lock. I was absolutely clear (and as polite as I could be) that this was simply not possible—not only because we would stand a good chance of killing them, but also because it was against CRT’s ruling that canoes etc. could not use the locks. He argued with me, saying

he had approached CRT and both CRT and the British Canoeing said that they were allowed to use locks as long as they were very careful! In the end, I absolutely refused to allow them in and was nastily abused as a result. One of my crew said that on a charter the previous week, they had had a similar problem at Froxfield Lock with two pairs of canoes lashed together, who insisted they were allowed to use the locks and indeed had been travelling through them—and they had their own lock-key to prove it. Again our skipper told them under no circumstances could they join the boat in the lock. This is getting beyond a joke and really needs addressing by CRT or someone is going to get killed. CRT really does need to make a public statement on this.”

Mark Tizard contacted CRT’s Interim Head of Boating, Jon Horsfall, and he replied:

“Thank you for raising the concerns of boaters following their experiences at Dunmill and Froxfield. We were concerned to hear

about what happened and are keen to know about any further instances. CRT’s advice on how canoeists and others in small non-powered craft should approach locks on the waterways is clear. It can be found on the CRT website at canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/canoeing-and-kayaking/canoeing-safely.

As long as you follow a few basic rules, canoeing is a safe sport and accidents are rare. If you want to make the most out of the sport and get off to the best start, then a canoeing course will show you all the basic techniques. You can find a canoe club offering beginners courses at on the British Canoeing website. The following tips will also help to keep you safe while you’re out and about on the canal, with the key point being the final one:

- Novices should always be accompanied by an accomplished canoeist.
- Wear a life jacket or buoyancy aid while afloat.
- Check the local waterway safety regulations before you set out.
- Take care that your craft is suitable for the waterway and that you are competent to use it.
- Locks, weirs and sluices can be very dangerous. Don’t stay aboard your craft in a filling or emptying lock—carry it around. If it is too heavy, use ropes to keep control from the side.

I have contacted British Canoeing (BC) and we have agreed that it would be helpful to engage boating organisations, the Trust, BC and others in promoting clear and straightforward information nationally. We agreed that a simple code of practice, similar to the recommendations above, promoted by all organisations would be helpful. Along with support from NABO and others, British Canoeing and the Trust are happy to lead.”



Photo: Charlotte Knight

Tunnels

Some trials were carried out with the British Canoe Union (BCU) [now British Canoeing] a number of years ago to try to understand what minimum lighting for unpowered craft was needed to ensure visibility. An 80 lumens white light at the front

An extract from the meeting with elected Boating Reps to the CRT Council in January 2017, titled: ‘Unpowered craft in tunnels update’

Where’s that canoe? Foulridge Tunnel
Photo: Peter Fellows





Canal & River Trust

CRT's advice to canoeists

In tunnels, you must use a forward facing bright light (such as a head-torch). Travel through in groups of at least three.

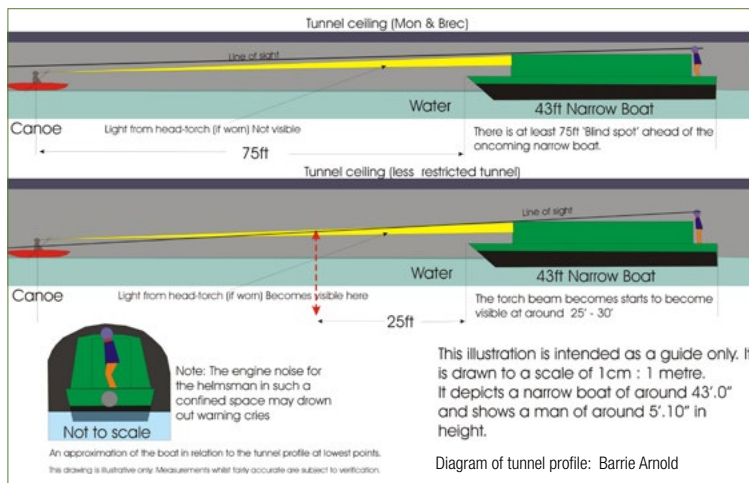
CRT's criteria for canoes and other small unpowered boats to pass through tunnels

(Last edited: 20 March 2017)

The tunnel is less than 400 metres long, and there are good sight lines through the tunnel

The tunnel is 400—650 metres long, and there are good site lines AND a single-way traffic system is in place

Passage through other tunnels is not permitted unless it's part of a managed event which has been given permission—exceptions may be made on the basis of local risk assessments taking account of factors such as potential smoke and fumes, existence of towpath/grab chains etc.



The 'blind spot' in front of a narrowboat, in which a canoeist is invisible, obviously varies according to the length of the boat and the height of the steerer's head above the boat roof, which in turn may be affected by the height of the tunnel. An estimate drawn up by Barrie Arnold, for a 43-foot narrowboat, shows that the canoeist is invisible to the steerer up to 75 feet in front of the boat when there is restricted tunnel height, and the light from a head-torch only becomes visible 25-30 feet in front of the boat in a higher tunnel.

was essential to comply with current bylaws, and we would advocate a red light at the rear to make the canoeist visible to following boats. BCU promoted this to its members. This was done alongside the re-issuing of the list of tunnels where canoe passage was permitted and where it was not, improved tunnel signage and clear guidance that everyone travelling through a tunnel is strongly advised to wear a lifejacket.

The main concern is on narrow canals with tunnels where sight lines are not clear, where conflict between boats and canoes in tunnels could result in canoes being crushed. Canoeing is not permitted through longer tunnels as a rule, but it can be arranged as part of an organised event. At Maida Hill Tunnel, a registration scheme has been put in place where canoeists can register for permission to pass through the tunnel. There has been limited

take-up, but it is working. If there was a significant increase in canoeists registering then it may lead to greater conflict as the tunnel is used by lots of trip and other boats. The Trust is currently looking at whether unpowered craft could be permitted to use Islington Tunnel, but it is longer so a traffic light scheme is being considered. This could benefit all boaters using the tunnel.

The only other change to a tunnel not listed on the website is at Foulridge Tunnel, which is part of the new canoe coast-to-coast trail. This tunnel is over a mile long and has a traffic light controlled system that the canoeists must use. On a few of the large river locks (on the Rivers Severn and Trent) where the portage is particularly high, canoeists are permitted through the locks. There have been extensive trials on these and there have not been any problems.

Comments from NABO Councillors on canoeists in tunnels :

"There have been several occasions when we have entered a tunnel and realised that there were canoeists inside that we were not able to see. It was only their shouting that alerted a crew member on the bow that they were there. The steerer could not hear these shouts above the noise of the engine."

"Head-lights worn by canoeists are inadequate because boaters are unable to detect the range between their boat and the canoeist. The lights move around, particularly when worn by children, as the canoeists look around. What is needed is a fixed white light on the front of the canoe, and ideally a red light fixed to the stern."

"I would not like to meet a canoeist in a tunnel—can you just imagine a wide-beam and a canoe meeting in Islington Tunnel!"

"Canoeists should not be allowed into narrow tunnels, especially those without a towpath, unless there is either a 'guard boat' at the entrances to warn approaching boats, or have CRT or British Canoeing volunteers that monitor canoes entering and leaving a tunnel."

Have members experienced problems with canoes in tunnels or locks?

Tunnels open for use by canoes and other small craft

Canal	Tunnel	Length (m)
Ashby Canal	Snarestone	228
Birmingham & Fazeley	Curdworth	52
Birmingham Mainline	Summit Galton	102 122
Caldon Canal	Froghall Leek	68 119
Chesterfield Canal	Drakeholes	135
Digbeth Branch	Ashted	102
Dudley Canal	Gosty Hill	509
Grand Union Canal	Shrewley	396
Huddersfield Narrow	Scout	188
Kennet & Avon Canal	Bath No.1 Bath No.2 Bruce	50 54 458
Leeds & Liverpool	Gannow	511
Llangollen Canal	Ellesmere Whitehouses Chirk	80 174 421
Oxford Canal	Newbold	189
Monmouth & Brecon	Ashford	343
Peak Forest Canal	Woodley Hyde Bank	153 285
Shropshire Union Canal	Cowley	74
Staffs & Worcester Canal	Dunsley Cookley	21 59
Stratford Canal (North)	Brandwood	322
Trent & Mersey Canal	Salterford Barnton	368 525
Wolverhampton Level	Coseley	329
Worcester & Birmingham	Edgbaston	97

NABO's Advice

We have also had reports of problems with (maybe inexperienced?) boaters passing in tunnels.

Here is NABO's advice: do not stop the boat as you will lose steerage and control, and then drift into the path of the oncoming boat. Do not use your bow-thruster to maintain the position of your boat—it will push the oncoming boat into the tunnel wall. Keep the boat on tickover to maintain steerage and pass the oncoming boat slowly.



Friends reunited

Mark Tizard takes a look at CRT's need for 'friends', using the title of a now-defunct social media site

As CRT was being formed, British Waterways commissioned a KPMG report regarding the future funding of the Trust. As an independent charity CRT could attract funding through private and corporate donors. The report predicted that, by the end of the 15-year DEFRA grant in 2026, charitable giving would contribute £9.7m to CRT's income, or around 8% of the total. Parliament was sceptical, prudently reducing this to £7m. By 2026, it was projected that there would be about 88,000 friends, contributing £4.3m a year.

However, charitable giving is a congested market and there are about 160,000 voluntary organisations and charities all looking for donations; some with substantial marketing budgets. Could CRT compete with the likes of the RSPCA, Save the Children, WWF etc., when only 31% of people who give to charity do so by monthly donation?

With a fanfare, CRT set the target at 100,000 friends and engaged an external fundraising organisation to recruit them. After the first two years, the fundraiser had gone bust and CRT moved to recruit its own 'chuggers', at an hourly rate of £9 plus commission, to raise funds at popular canal sites. After three years, CRT had around 10,000 friends, but an accumulated loss of £2.5m. According to the 2014/15 accounts, 16,000 friends had been recruited from 430 million visits to the canals. Meanwhile, corporate donations are progressing well with, for example, £500,000 from Help for Heroes and £250,000 from the Postcode Lottery.

Why is this important?

CRT currently relies on a £49m annual grant, including £10m for hitting key performance indicators. This needs to be replaced, or substantially reduced, by 2026 when the current grant ends and a new grant is negotiated. The funds generated from monthly donations by the hoped-for 88,000 friends are to be a substantial part of CRT's income, leading to a lower Government grant. If CRT is unable to approach this target, the outcome will be that less funding will be available to maintain the canal infrastructure, which will have an impact on boating or it could lead to a higher than expected licence increase.

Friends reunited

There are 33,000 licensed boats, maybe 50,000 boaters. I am sure that some boaters are among the current 16,000 friends, but this may be a very small number. By and large, boaters feel that they already contribute substantially to financing CRT, through their licences and marina/mooring fees. In the recent licensing review, NABO suggested that there should be an option for boaters to donate an amount, using gift aid, to a boater's fund that could be jointly administered by the CRT Welfare Officer and the Waterways Chaplaincy. But there is also an opportunity here for CRT's management and boating organisations to do some serious thinking about how CRT might befriend their customer base in a way that would encourage them to become 'friends'. This might not necessarily be through the current friends' model, but it could be through a process that is specific to boaters and boating organisations. After all, it is in both of our interests that funding for CRT continues to grow. Friends reunited, yes, that would be it.

Letters to the Editor

Opinions expressed here are independent of NABO policy and statements made have not been verified as true.

Towpath 'fines'

Let me offer a view on the issue of 'fines'. I would be surprised if CRT has any powers to levy a fine. Local Authorities can levy fines for specific by-law offences—litter and dog fouling for instance. It seems to me that CRT may have rights with regard to unauthorised mooring, possibly under contract law and the law of trespass. Under trespass, the aggrieved landowner can only sue for damages and must prove a loss. Under contract, an aggrieved party can only ask a court to uphold rights defined in the contract—assuming a valid contract exists. 'Liquidated damages' (effectively a 'fine' for a breach) are not enforceable under 'consumer' contracts. This latter point was the grounds on which many banks were required to refund unlawful bank charges—charges which were effectively fixed penalties for a breach of contract. Of course, CRT, claiming to be able to impose a fine where no such power exists, would constitute the criminal offence of obtaining money by deception. An employee of a contractor attempting to extract money could have his collar felt by the local constabulary. Anyone who is asked to pay a towpath fine should perhaps call the police!

John Hancox

Mark Tizard replies: I fully agree with your sentiments—I believe this would be the case for any overstaying £25 penalty on visitor moorings, unless CRT can demonstrate that it is a reasonable charge. The worrying thing, as these fines spread across the system, will be the temptation to outsource their collection. The Olympic Park and the London long-term mooring trial both feature £150 penalties, reduced to £75 on prompt payment, with both collections outsourced.

John Hancox adds: The key point is the legal basis for the 'fine' or 'charge'. Only The Crown can impose a fine via a court. Private interests can only sue for damages—either under con-

tract or for trespass or some other civil wrong. The award (or not) of damages is at the discretion of the court. These are fundamental principles and CRT should be challenged from that standpoint. It would be interesting to know if any £150 mooring 'fines' were actually collected or if any were pursued in court.

Car insurance

Does NABO have a forum, guideline or source of advice or help for boat owners who want to insure their car where the boat is moored? In general, the 'risk' address is where the car is mainly kept, and this can be as little as 51% of the time. There does not appear to be any set guideline or rule that underwriters follow. Some want the 51% address, others use the 'land' address as the main/risk address. Then there are different interpretations of the phrase 'permanent address'. It's pot luck which underwriter you choose. If you have a number of members who have encountered variation in car insurance, I'd be happy to join and collate a group response to selected underwriters.

Sean Haacke, NB Chough

I name this boat ...

If you have spotted a boat name that made you smile, please let me have a photo to use in future issues. Here's one spotted by Brian Holt.



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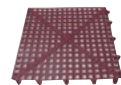
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