

# PRESS RELEASE

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## CHARITY ADDRESSES CHALLENGES OF SOARING POPULARITY OF LONDON'S WATERWAYS

Boating in London has soared in popularity in recent years. With the number of boats on London's canals and rivers growing by 76% since 2012, the Canal & River Trust is today announcing a raft of initiatives that will benefit boaters and help manage the strain placed on the capital's 200-year old network.

The Canal & River Trust – the charity that cares for over 100 miles of waterways in the London region – has produced a London Mooring Strategy in consultation with boaters, boating groups and local authorities, amongst others. Initiatives include managing the increasing demand for mooring spaces, improving facilities, and fairly balancing the needs of everyone who uses the capital's waters.

In 2018/19, the Trust will be making the following improvements:

- Water points:
  - New taps at Harlesden, Sturt's Lock (Shoreditch), Bow Locks, Alperton
  - Improve water pressure at Paddington Basin
  - Relocate tap from Old Ford to Sweetwater (Olympic Park)
- Waste facilities:
  - New compounds at Harlesden, Feildes Weir (Hoddesdon), Stonebridge Lock
- Elsan (toilet) facilities:
  - Carry out feasibility work to open an Elsan to the public on the Regent's Canal
- Working with boaters and volunteers to install additional mooring rings
- Residential moorings developed at Millwall Outer Dock and Hayes
- Pre-bookable moorings developed in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on St Thomas's Creek (up to two berths), and on the Lee Navigation adjacent to the Park (three berths)
- Clear signage for 'watersports zones' at Broxbourne and on the Lower Lee Navigation
- Improved information at noticeboards, welcome stations and front-of-house

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Patron: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. Canal & River Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with company number 7807276 and registered charity number 1146792, registered office address: First Floor North, Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1BB

Customer priorities for which the Trust hopes to secure funding in future years include:

- Development of 1800m of new long-term offside moorings, the majority of which, subject to planning permission, will be for residential use
- More mooring rings to increase 14-day mooring capacity
- Changes to short-term moorings to ensure the fairer use of space
- New facilities to meet growing customer demand, and improvement of existing sites
- Working with boaters to provide boating information and advice, as well as working with police to address concerns about towpath safety
- Creation of opportunities for boating businesses in key visitor destinations
- The introduction of further new pre-bookable visitor mooring sites following a review of demand, and a free pre-bookable eco-mooring zone

Matthew Symonds, boating strategy and engagement manager at the Canal & River Trust, said: “What used to be the capital’s best kept secret has gained popular appeal, and London’s canals are busier than any time in recent history. There are fantastic opportunities for water-based businesses, myriad ways to enjoy leisure time, and they are a place that many people call home. The resulting boom in boat numbers has caused an enormous amount of pressure on what is, after all, a finite space.

“The London Mooring Strategy is the result of our collaborative work with boaters, boating groups, local authorities, developers, and other stakeholders such as rowing groups. There’s been a good level of support for the proposals and, following an extensive consultation, we’ve listened to feedback and made changes as a result. Now we’ll work with boaters and other stakeholders to put the improvements into place and make things better for boaters and sustainable for our canals and rivers.

“Despite the challenges, London’s canals and rivers are a wonderful resource for all those who know and love them, and it’s vital that we make the best possible use of this ever-evolving space which makes so many people happy. We believe the strategy fairly balances the differing needs of all those who live, work and play on the capital’s waterways.”

To develop the London Mooring Strategy, the Trust held various workshops, consultation meetings, and engagement events, as well as conducting a wide-ranging survey of boaters in the London region. These helped shape a comprehensive strategy that identified detailed plans for each different London ‘character area’. In autumn 2017 the Trust conducted an open survey consultation on the proposals. The consultation closed in January 2018 having received over 1,200 responses.

The full report, with a detailed breakdown of the improvements, can be found at:

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/londonmooringstrategy>

ENDS

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**Notes to editors**

London boat numbers:

	Total boats in London
Mar 2012	2326
Mar 2013	2581
Mar 2014	2964
Mar 2015	3255
Mar 2016	3662
Mar-2017	4001
Mar-2018	4098

London Mooring Strategy objectives:

- For better provision and management of a range of facilities and mooring types in London
- To manage the high number of boats in London and to mitigate the environmental impacts on the waterways and neighbours
- To protect existing, and generate additional, income to maintain the waterways in London
- To help ensure fair sharing of water space
- To enable a wider range of boaters to visit and navigate in London
- To support a London waterway destination and tourism strategy
- To ensure the mooring strategy contributes to the Trust's aim that London's waterways help to transform neighbourhoods and enrich people's lives

The initiatives fall under the following nine categories:

1. Support and prioritise development of new long-term moorings in less busy areas, primarily outer London
2. Encourage development of long-term moorings from a diverse range of providers
3. Improve provision, maintenance and management of short-stay moorings
4. Develop custom short-stay moorings to meet demand
5. Winter Moorings that recognise and balance the needs of all boaters
6. Better provision and management of boating facilities
7. Improve communication between boaters and the Trust
8. Increase business boating activity in key London waterway destinations
9. Support activities that ensure accessible and affordable access to the water for all

The Canal & River Trust cares for and brings to life 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England & Wales. We believe waterways have the power to make a real difference to people's lives and that spending time by water can make us all healthier and happier. By bringing communities together to transform their local waterway, we are creating places and spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, every day.

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