



Canal &
River Trust

Richard Parry
Chief Executive

Direct Tel: 01908 351809
E-mail: richard.parry@canalrivertrust.org.uk

22 August 2016

Michelle Donelan MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Sent by Email: michelle.donelan.mp@parliament.uk and Hard Copy

Dear *Michelle*

Term Time Cruising Proposal

Thank you for your letter of 29 July (emailed on 5 August), and for your initiative in facilitating discussion on this matter in our meeting last month. I am sorry to hear that you have since been unwell and I hope you are back in good health.

We appreciate that this is a matter of considerable local concern, though as I explained when we met, we also have a responsibility to see it from a national perspective having regard to our duties for the care of the waterways and the legal framework in which we manage the use of those inland waterways. They are a treasured and fragile national asset that we have to look after for everyone to enjoy now and in the future.

Given that context, we are considering the proposal carefully; we note that it may raise some wider issues that it may be helpful to consider at this stage. It seems to us that, in effect, this proposal would enable liveaboard boats to remain in a small area for considerable periods of time without a designated home mooring. Does this for instance mean that they also become liable to pay council tax in the area concerned as they will be using local services, as those on our residential moorings (as well as other local residents) are?

It would be very helpful to see the details of the wide consultation you refer to in your letter, involving 750 people. To better understand the dimensions of this issue we are also undertaking further work of our own to establish how many families there are living on the water in this way, and how it is that many of those (who do meet the legal requirement to navigate whilst their children attend schools) are able to comply. For example, we know that some in this boating community on the western end of the K&A have recently increased the extent of their movement and now comply with our guidance, such that we have been able to renew their full 12 month licence without any further special arrangement being introduced. You will understand that we would not want to do anything that actually has the effect of encouraging these boaters to travel less than they currently do on such a busy canal, or indeed to encourage others onto the canal merely to take advantage of such a relaxation.

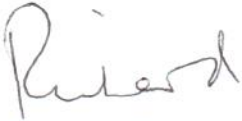
Canal & River Trust First Floor North Station House 500 Elder Gate Milton Keynes MK9 1BB
T 01908 351802 E customer.services@canalrivertrust.org.uk www.canalrivertrust.org.uk

Canal & River Trust is a company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales under number 7807276; and a charity registered with the Charity Commission under number 1146792.

We are also going to consult other interested bodies with a large supporter base in the area; the Inland Waterways Association and the Residential Boat Owners Association, both national organisations have a large boating membership on the canal.

I will be in touch again soon, once we have had further discussions.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard', written in a cursive style.

Richard Parry
Chief Executive