

FIRST MARGINALISED, NOW PENALISED...

England and Wales has over 2,000 miles of beautiful canals and rivers. They provide wonderful green corridors throughout the country, homes for wildlife, and recreational space for people to enjoy the outdoors. They also provide a home for the travelling boater community. This is an age-old, simple way of life with an often low environmental impact. But our way of life is being threatened by the Canal & River Trust (CRT), the very organisation tasked with protecting us and our waterways.

UNDERVALUED AND OVERCHARGED...

CRT is introducing an increase in licence fees above inflation for the next 4 years. There will also be a surcharge for boats without a home mooring based on the premise that we receive 'greater utility' from the waterways. Boats without a home mooring have been at the sharp end of marginalisation by waterway authorities for decades. In the last 21 years, CRT, and British Waterways before it, have tried four times to enforce additional charges on itinerant boaters.

Rather than saving money to use on the maintenance of the waterways, CRT has been wasting money unnecessarily increasing enforcement of law-abiding boat dwellers, this includes spending hundreds of thousands of pounds on just 10 miles on London Waterways in an attempt to restrict mooring by introducing inappropriately named 'safety zones'; and on new corporate logos, which are unlikely to rectify the dwindling 46% customer satisfaction rate.



WE LOOK AFTER THE WATERWAYS

As travelling boat dwellers we help maintain the flow on the canal, displacing silt and keeping the water moving. Many of us remove rubbish and dumped objects from the water and the towpath, repairing facilities where we can, or reporting them for repair. We bring security to the towpath, making it a safer place for the general public to enjoy; and also provide assistance to any boat in need of help on the water. We take pride in where we live. This is recognised by our local communities, but sadly not by the CRT who repay us by restricting and overcharging us.

NO SURCHARGE!!

We as a community condemn the surcharge. It is a direct attack on our nomadic way of life and the travelling boater community. The surcharge will generate a small margin of profit for the CRT (which makes up only 0.6% of their total income) but this increase will have a huge impact on the finances of individuals, putting people at risk of poverty, degradation, destitution and homelessness. One of the CRT objectives is to “balance pricing and affordability” in a way that is “fair” to all boaters. If more money is genuinely needed, then a uniform 1% increase across all licence holders would generate the same income as a targeted increase on boats without home moorings. The surcharge is not about raising finance, it's about marginalising our community.

A LOT OF HIGH EARNERS IN CRT

According to the Charity Commission there are 15 people in Canal and River Trust paying themselves over £100k per year. Two of whom think they're worth over £200k per year. While CRT claims it needs to charge boaters more and cut services, it is paying these high earners more than the Prime Minister! For example, the CEO of the National Trust earns a lower wage than the CEO of CRT, although the National Trust has almost four times the number of employees, twelve times more volunteers and a budget three times bigger. (In 2022 the CEO of CRT earned £219k while the CEO of the National Trust earned £199k annually)

	Number of employees
£60k to £70k	41
£70k to £80k	22
£80k to £90k	13
£90k to £100k	6
£100k to £110k	7
£110k to £120k	1
£120k to £130k	2
£150k to £200k	3
£200k to £250k	2

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

stopboatlicencediscrimination@gmail.com

<https://shorturl.at/kyBO6>

