

# BULLETIN

31st July 2018

## EA URGED TO RECONSIDER REGISTRATION FEE INCREASES

We will be responding to EA's latest consultation on registration fee increases on their navigations by asking them to reconsider the impact of the proposed rises on boat owners, which would see some paying over 30% more for their licence over 3 years.

The proposals will hit less well-off boat owners in particular, and the timing of the consultation to coincide with the six weeks of the school holidays, when families will be out on their boats enjoying the waterways, seems unfortunate.

In the consultation EA propose increasing their registration fees by the same amount in both 2019-20 and 2020-21 as they did for 2018-19, stating that the increases "reflect the significant gap between existing levels of income from boat registration charges on each waterway and the cost of providing the services which these charges pay for."



The proposed increases are:

- River Thames: 5.7%
- Anglian Waterways: 7.5%
- Upper Medway: 10%
- Unpowered boats and "Gold" joint CRT/EA licences: 7.7% (an average of the 3 individual percentages for each waterway area because they are nationally consistent charges).

These increases place an unreasonable burden on boat owners, are inconsistent across EA's different navigation areas, and are likely to disengage boaters at a time when EA is looking for their support through their new "Navigating Forward" strategy.

This strategy, which was presented at a meeting with EA senior management a few weeks ago, will include investigating new income streams. We have offered our support and help with projects that will allow EA's navigation team to increase its income without disenfranchising boat owners and pricing them off the waterways.

Bulletin readers are urged to respond to EA's consultation, which closes on 30th August.

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# IWA NEWS

## HOT SUMMER CAUSES WATERWAY CLOSURES

The hot, dry weather conditions that the UK has been experiencing for much of this summer are causing problems on a number of waterways around the country.

Canal & River Trust has announced a package of measures on targeted sections of its canals to manage the severe water shortages it is facing in parts of Northern England. With June being the third driest month since records began in 1910 and the dry weather continuing into July, this has placed extra pressure on reservoir holdings and depleted other sources of water that feed the canal network. There are closures and restrictions, either already in place or due to be implemented over the next couple of weeks, across CRT's waterways in Northern England, including on the Rochdale, Huddersfield Narrow, Macclesfield, Peak Forest, Lancaster and Leeds & Liverpool canals.

Closures are likely to continue throughout August, or even longer if there is no significant, sustained rainfall.

CRT is encouraging boaters elsewhere to help conserve water by:

- Sharing locks where possible and making the best use of the water available.
- Ensuring paddles are fully closed once they've passed through a lock.
- Aiming for minimal contact with gates so that they don't cause any minor damage which could increase leakage when navigating through locks, by ensuring gates are fully open before they pass through.

To check the current situation on closures and restrictions refer to CRT's website.

Meanwhile the Environment Agency are advising boaters on the River Great Ouse, which will include those on their way to and from IWA's Festival of Water at St Neots over the August Bank Holiday, to allow extra time for water levels to equalise when using guillotine gates, due to low river levels. Boaters are also asked to watch out for weed on the Old West River, and shallows between Houghton and Godmanchester. Boaters are encouraged to share locks wherever possible but boat owners are reminded that many of the locks on the River Great Ouse are not wide enough to take two narrow beam boats side by side.

You can check for any closures or restrictions on Anglian navigations by checking EA's online shared calendar that provides up to date information on river conditions.

And it's not just powered boats that are affected, with the water level on the River Wye at its lowest it's been for 30 years. Although there aren't currently any restrictions in place, EA has written to local businesses saying that they may have to close the river to canoeing with 24 hours notice if the dry spell persists, due to "a significant risk of ecological damage".

## BEDFORD AND MILTON KEYNES WATERWAY ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust has published its Economic Analysis of the proposed waterway park commissioned in consultation with B&MKW Consortium partners.

The report identifies that the waterway has the potential to deliver significant benefits to the project area and wider region. The headline economic impacts outlined in the report include:

- 1,418 temporary construction workers

and 101 direct full time posts, as well as opportunities for nearly 100 apprenticeships.

- £118.9m increase in the value of construction related goods and services in the area (Gross Value Added - GVA) over the course of the build programme and an increase of £4.1m operational GVA per annum.
- Residential premiums of up to £44.1m at key housing sites on the waterway.
- Stimulating tourism trips and spending by an additional £7.1m to the local economy annually, with 790,000 m additional visits annually.
- Promoting wellbeing and the potential for addressing health inequalities in the local area. Promoting sustainable travel methods. Impact on modal change and monetised health benefits of £281,000 per annum.
- Better management of flood risk through integration of flood mitigation and water storage in high risk areas as part of new developments.
- A new towpath will provide key active travel links between new, existing and potential communities in Milton Keynes, Bedford and Central Bedfordshire.
- The waterway itself

will provide a strategic connection between the River Great Ouse and the Grand Union Canal, creating a wider cruising ring linking to the wider Middle Level Navigations via Huntington, St Ives, and connecting north to the River Nene and south to Cambridge via the River Cam waterways.

- Potential for providing essential digital infrastructure, district heating, and energy technologies to support new communities.
- Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Natural Capital provided through contribution to Local Plans, South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan, and fulfilling priorities of a forthcoming Natural Capital Investment Plan for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Growth Corridor.

## HS2 PHASE 2A SELECT COMMITTEE - IWA PETITION HEARING

We have welcomed publication of the HS2 Phase 2A Select Committee's Second Special Report recommending improved noise mitigation for canal boat occupants at Great Haywood and Fradley Wood in Staffordshire.

IWA Lichfield Branch Chairman, Phil Sharpe presented IWA's Petition to the HS2 House of Commons Select Committee on 9th July, asking for recognition of the residential use of most canal boats, and for better noise mitigation fencing for boats moored in Great Haywood marina, on the Trent & Mersey Canal at Great Haywood and Hoo Mill, and near Fradley Junction.

The House of Commons High Speed Rail (West Midlands - Crewe) Bill Select Committee, Second Special Report of Session 2017-19, published on 23 July says: "The Inland Waterways Association petitioned on behalf of occupants of narrowboats and how HS2 classified their residences. The Great Haywood Marina will be significantly impacted by the scheme and HS2 should look at installing the 5m barrier as requested by the petitioner. Furthermore, HS2 should look at providing further noise mitigation at Fradley Wood."

We had petitioned on several issues including noise mitigation on HS2 Phase 1 (London - West Midlands) but HS2 Ltd had continued to regard canal boat moorings as 'transitory' with users staying only for a few hours at a time, whereas in fact many are occupied residentially for extended periods from several days to several months.

Members of this Select Committee have listened to the evidence, understood that people do not just live in houses but also in boats, and recommended improved noise protection for these two canal locations. We hope that HS2 Ltd will now realise that the same principles should apply to the whole of HS2 and that we will not have to petition again on this matter for the waterways affected by Phase 2B (Crewe to Manchester and West Midlands to Leeds).

A transcript of the proceedings is now available on the Government website.

The session can also be viewed on the Parliament Live tv website.

## **GAPTRACKER - BOATERS' FACILITIES CAMPAIGN**

Thank you to Bulletin readers for the fantastic response so far to our GapTracker campaign, which allows boaters to report gaps in the provision of facilities across the waterways. Over 200 individual issues have been reported so far since the launch of the campaign at the end of May.

The GapTracker campaign will continue to gather evidence over the rest of the summer to build up an accurate picture of boaters' facilities across the

whole waterway network.

Feedback received so far suggests a lot of dissatisfaction about the number of portable chemical toilet disposal points currently out of use on Canal & River Trust's waterways, some of them long term closures, and this is an issue that IWA has raised urgently with CRT ahead of reporting the overall findings for their 2000 miles of waterways to them in the autumn. A number of respondents are also mentioning the lack of recycling provision, and this is something else that we will be taking up. The Environment Agency has said that it will welcome the findings of the survey on their navigations, and we will also be contacting other navigation authorities where we receive information about the lack of facilities.

Don't forget to log a report if you notice an issue with boater's facilities this summer, or if you identify an area which would benefit from new facilities. Find out more about our GapTracker facilities campaign.

## **MIDDLE LEVEL BILL**

The Middle Level Bill finished its Committee Stage in the House of Lords on 12th July, and with some amendments and a few further undertakings by the Commissioners, has passed that Committee.

The amendments will strengthen the Navigation Advisory Committee (NAC) and provide for a dispute resolution procedure for any issues between that Committee and the Middle Level Commissioners (MLC).

There is a new statutory provision that MLC are not required to cover their navigation costs from navigation income but, to ensure that the Act is future proofed, a suggestion by the petitioners that this could never occur was rejected. MLC are also empowered to simply move, rather than remove, a vessel, should they deem it appropriate.

The large bulk of other amendments proposed by the petitioners were not, however, granted by the Committee. The Lords now have to give the Bill a formal Third Reading before it has to return to the Commons in the Autumn. Royal Assent by Christmas is still anticipated.

## **COUNTDOWN TO IWA FESTIVAL OF WATER AT ST NEOTS**

One hundred boats will cruise to the River Great Ouse this summer to join our campaign focused Festival of Water in St Neots.

Taking place on the beautiful, riverside Regatta Meadow over the August Bank Holiday

weekend (25th to 27th August 2018) the event will promote the economic, social and wellbeing potential offered by two new waterways – between Bedford and Milton Keynes linking the Grand Union Canal to the River Great Ouse through a series of waterway parks and the Fens Waterways Link connecting the River Witham from Boston to the River Nene in Peterborough. The festival will also highlight IWA's view that the Environment Agency, which manages the navigable waterways in Anglian Region, needs more funding.

Daily admission to the festival and parking are free, and with the excellent range of entertainment and other attractions visitors could easily plan to spend the day if not longer. Campsite pitches are still available for those who might want to stay for the full weekend.

Decked in their festival bunting and flags, cruisers, narrowboats and historic narrowboats will be joined by the Environment Agency's patrol boats for visitors to view from the riverbank. Anyone who wishes to get afloat can take a trip on the John Bunyan, provided by Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust or they can have a go at canoeing or paddleboarding with Action4Youth. A selection of vintage buses and classic cars, a fun dog show on Sunday,

birds of prey, an air cadet marching band on Saturday, an illuminated boat parade on the Sunday evening followed by a fireworks display organised by the town council, mean visitors for the day or weekend will have plenty to interest them. When it's time to relax visitors can grab a bite to eat and a drink from the real ale bar and be entertained with live music and dance.

In the lead up to the Festival local primary aged children are encouraged to have a go at the River Trail passport. Lots of St Neots' retailers are taking part, asking children to spot the waterways sights they would experience if travelling by boat to the Festival. Children follow the trail around the town and complete the passport at the Festival to earn a reward.

## SILVER PROPELLER CHALLENGE RAISES CAMPAIGN ISSUES ON THE DEE BRANCH

IWA's Silver Propeller Challenge continues to highlight some campaigning issues around the country. One of our members, Ian Fletcher, recently took a detour down the Dee Branch in Chester to "bag" a location, and encountered some navigation issues, which we have urgently raised with

Canal & River Trust at a local and national level.

After initially coming across floating weed islands and struggling to exit the second lock as one of the bottom gates would not open fully (due to some protruding bolts) Ian then discovered he couldn't get any further, and nor could he wind his boat.

The lift bridge, before the 3rd and final lock on the Branch, turned out to be inoperable. As Ian reported afterwards: *"The hydraulics on the lift-bridge were (despite it only being a fairly light-weight footbridge) horrendously hard - too hard not only for my wife to operate but even for a fit, young university student who happened to be passing. All that they were able to do was to lift the deck by about a foot."*

Ian had already been told during prior discussion with CRT that he would be unable to get into the 3rd lock, which is the river lock onto the River Dee, due to severe siltation, but he was surprised to notice a stop plank in place above the lock, which would have prevented any further passage even if he had got through the lift bridge.

A widening on the bend in the second pound, which should be wide enough to wind a 50ft boat, was too silted up, so Ian had to reverse back up the two locks (and back past the

floating weed islands).

This situation is particularly disappointing following the recent success in getting EA to remove a flood barrier which had been in place for 2 years, following campaigning by IWA and CRT, as reported in the April Bulletin.

As part of the Silver Propeller Challenge, boaters are encouraged to use the Dee Branch, and for the purposes of claiming it as a destination the second pound will act as the Silver Propeller location, until such time as CRT have completed works to address the issues. IWA will continue campaigning for the whole branch to be fully navigable again.

## SUCCESSFUL TRIAL CAMPAIGN CRUISE ON THE OLD BEDFORD RIVER

Ahead of a campaign cruise planned for 19th to 22nd August on the Old Bedford River, two boats belonging to IWA Peterborough Branch members took part in a trial run over the weekend of 8th and 9th July.

The two narrow boats, Olive Emily and Lily May, became the first boats through the Old Bedford Sluice this year. Only Olive Emily made it as far as the current limit of navigation at Welches Dam, as Lily May experienced engine

problems, exacerbated by the weed and lack of dredging in one particular area. The team organising the August cruise has raised this issue, along with excessive weed and reeds at Welches Dam, with the Environment agency in the hope that the situation can be improved before the larger group of boats cruises this statutory navigation in August.

The boaters and their crew were grateful to the two lock keepers from the Environment Agency and the Middle Level Commissioners, for their assistance in getting through the Old Bedford Sluice. The boats moored overnight in the vicinity of Welney, where their crews enjoyed a convivial evening in the Lamb & Flag pub before returning to Salter's Lode the next day.

The main aim of the August campaign cruise is to get a flotilla of boats into and out of the Old Bedford River and up to Welches Dam during the period 19th to 22nd August ahead of IWA's Festival of Water at St Neots, which takes place the following weekend (25th to 27th August). The focus for the event will be a group photograph of as many boats and people as possible at Welches Dam Lock, on the Monday lunchtime, to highlight the fact that the lock has now been closed (and that route on to the Middle Level Navigations has been unavailable) for a staggering

12 years, and to support the campaign for its reopening.

Anyone interested in taking part in the campaign cruise, or supporting the event in other ways, is asked to register their interest by emailing [alison.smedley@waterways.org.uk](mailto:alison.smedley@waterways.org.uk). Further information can be found on IWA's website.

## CONSULTATION RESPONSES

IWA has recently submitted consultation responses to the following:

### Wales National Development Framework Preferred Option Consultation

The significance of heritage assets and conservation as a key facet of the future economic prosperity of Wales is one of the main messages in our response to this consultation, along with recognition of the major contribution that rivers and canals make to landscapes, recreation and well-being. Our response also mentions IWA's support for canal restoration schemes in Wales, which will undoubtedly open up new linear recreational and tourism corridors but will at the same time restore historic navigations and promote the interpretation and enjoyment of Wales' industrial and commercial heritage.

## Raynsford Review of the Planning System

Our response welcomes this Review as IWA believes that the planning system is capable of being improved for the wider benefit of the country, stakeholders, and local communities. IWA considers that, whilst the Review is right to start at “first principles” by seeking consensus on the purpose of Planning, we consider that “first principles” should also include the most appropriate geographical administrative areas to operate the Planning system, the means by which Spatial Planning can embrace both Physical, Social and Economic Planning; and the measures necessary to make the Planning system more democratic.

### Non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) and red diesel: Call for evidence

In the Spring Budget 2018 government called for evidence on the use of marked (‘red’) diesel in Non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) in order to improve its understanding of how it is used. The categories of NRMM eligible to use red diesel includes maritime and inland waterway vessel operators. Private pleasure craft can use red diesel but suppliers must retain and repay to Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) the proportion of the rebate that

relates to motive power rather than to generate electricity for use on board.

We have responded to the call for evidence on options for reducing emissions from NRMM and their cost-effectiveness, with suggestions for interventions to reduce emissions.

This call follows on from the 2017 call for evidence on the use of red diesel. IWA’s response to that call for evidence is also available on IWA’s website.

## WE’RE RECRUITING – WATERWAY RESTORATION OFFICER

Work with us - we’re looking for a part time Waterways Restoration Officer to work with our Head Office team in Chesham.

We’re looking for an enthusiastic individual who has a passion for heritage to be part of our Restoration Hub team. The successful candidate will promote waterway restoration across a wide range of stakeholders as well as providing guidance and support to waterway restoration projects across the country.

£30k pro rata plus benefits. An element of home working would be considered for the right candidate

Find out more on the IWA website and how to apply.

## BOOK NOW – IWA TRAILBOAT FESTIVAL 2019

Bookings for trailboat moorings and campsite pitches are now open for IWA’s 2019 Trailboat Festival on the Lancaster Canal.

2019 is the bi-centenary of the opening of the Lancaster Canal and the Trailboat Festival will be a highlight of the 200 year celebrations. The Festival will be held alongside Country Fest and trailboaters will be invited to cruise the newly restored “First Furlong”. It’s anticipated the Festival will raise the profile of the current and future regeneration of the Northern Reaches and promote the benefits of the inland waterways corridor to the wider community including schools and user groups such as walkers and canoeists amongst others.

Book your place before 1st March 2019 and get a 50% discount. Early bookings for campsite pitches and trailboats cost just £10.

Book your trailboat mooring online.  
Book your campsite pitch online.

## A SUMMER OF FESTIVALS

IWA Branches across the country host and support events across the year to raise awareness and campaign for local waterways.

### Ware Boat Festival

IWA Lee & Stort Branch hosted its annual Ware Boat Festival, on the River Lee over 6th - 8th July 2018.

The event, which is a weekend of fun and frolics on, in, and around the river and the town featured a decorated boat parade, boat handling competition and a barbeque.

Keep an eye out for next year's Ware Boat Festival.

### Chelmsford River Festival

IWA Chelmsford Branch supported Chelmsford River Festival at Springfield Basin on the Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation on 1st July, by acting as harbour master and promoting the waterways. The Festival was part of a bigger event taking place in the town.

Chelmer Cruises, which is a subsidiary of IWA's Essex Waterways, brought trip boat Victoria to the basin to offer cream teas and boat trips were provided by Blackwater Dawn.

As Victoria returned to her base at Paper Mill Lock the following day, nine councillors

including the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the past Mayor travelled from Springfield Basin to Sandford Mill to see the recent developments at Springfield Basin from the water.

## OXFORD CANAL FESTIVAL

Oxford Canal Festival returns in September. Supported by IWA Oxfordshire Branch, the event organised by Oxford Canal Heritage will see music, walks and activities alongside the Oxford Canal at the Aristotle Lane Recreation Ground in Oxford. IWA Oxfordshire Branch will be organising free trip boats for festival goers and promoting the inland waterways as they do for Banbury Canal Day every year.

The event will also include a fancy dress parade, dog show, food and drink, canal traders, canal olympics, Roses and Castles painting, swingboats, talks and storytelling.

A video competition for young film makers is encouraging people aged 5-16 yrs to produce a video depicting canal life with cash prizes to be won.

## IWA MEMBER DISCOUNTS AND SPECIAL OFFERS

Many of the offers below can be claimed simply by using your IWA membership card. For others, log in or phone the membership team on 01494 783453 for details.

*Please note: All discounts and offers are entirely at the organisers' discretion.*

### Enjoy the Waterways Through Hire Boats and Leisure

ABC Boat Hire - 15% discount on holidays (Direct Bookings Only)

Blackwater Boats - 10% discount on boat trips

CanalCruising.co.uk - 10% discount on holidays

Canal Boat Magazine - 5 issues for £5.00

City Centre Cruises - 10% discount for Sunday lunch cruises in Manchester

Frangipani SUP Ltd - 10% discount on adult beginner 'Stand Up & Paddle' lessons

Jenny Wren- 10% discount off cruises

Wyvern Shipping Co. Ltd- 10% discount on published prices

### Eating Out

To take advantage of eating out offers you just need to produce a valid IWA membership card.

Kings Lock Tearooms- 10% discount on food

Ring 'O Bells Pub - 10% discount on food

The Fingerpost Pub & Restaurant - 10% discount on food

The Bounty Pub - 10% discount on food

The Clifford Arms Pub - 10% discount on food

The Three Locks Pub - 10% discount on food

The Wharf Pub - 10% discount

### Better Value on Boats and Equipment

Boatshed Grand Union - 10% discount on brokerage

Boat Windows Ltd - 5% discount

Calcutt Boats - 5% online discount

Channelglaze Ltd. - 5% discount on double glazing

Cotswold Outdoor - 10% discount

IceGripper - 20% discount on ICETrekkers Diamond Grip

Kings Lock Chandlery - 5% discount (exclusions apply)

Marine Mega Store Ltd - 15% discount

Midland Chandlers - 5% discount

RoadPro - 5% discount

Solar Technology International- 10% discount on PV Logic Narrow Boat Kits & Foldup Panels

Willowbridge Marina - 10% discount on chandlery purchases and services in the yard

Zead - Free Postage & Accessories worth up to £16 when buying a Z-200 WiFi Adapter or Z-250 3.5G Dongle

### Services

Europcar - Special hire rates to IWA members

Forge Studio - 10% discount

Harbour Clean - 10% discount

I Love Meet and Greet Ltd - 15% discount

Lee Sanitation - 10% on orders over £100

Paper Wizard - 15% discount

River Canal Rescue - up to 15% discount

Wavetrain Marine - 5% discount on selected 1 day RYA SRC VHF Licence Course

**Please note: All discounts and offers are entirely at the organisers' discretion.**

To see details of how to take advantage of these offers, please go to the IWA Members discount page.

For IWA members who receive a printed copy of this bulletin in the post, please contact the membership team on 01494 783453 for the details of the offers.

Members can also support IWA with a Narrow Boat magazine subscription

## BOAT INSURANCE

IWA has an arrangement with insurers Navigators & General and River Canal Rescue that provides top quality boat insurance and access to the basic waterway rescue service for boat owners, with the added benefit that every policy taken out and subsequently renewed helps IWA, and thus furthers our charitable work for the waterways.

See more information about the IWA insurance scheme for boaters.

### Contact Us

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