



Minutes

Title:	Future of Boat Licencing Review Commission	
Date:	10 September 2025	
Venue:	Teams	
Present:	Andrew Cowan Sir Chris Kelly Penelope Barber	Chair
In attendance Canal & River Trust:	Tom Deards Poppy Welburn Matthew Aymes Lucy Barry	Legal & Governance Director Project & Infrastructure Lawyer National Manager- Licence Compliance & Enforcement Senior Solicitor Advocate
	Simon Salem	Previously British Waterways and Canal & River Trust Marketing Director

Governance		
44/25	The Commission confirmed there were no new declarations of interest to note.	
45/25	The Commission were happy with the draft minutes for the meeting 25 June. It was noted that the Commission has met informally both with and without employees from the Trust and with third parties in recent months as part of its review. The meetings with Trust employees have been to obtain briefings on the operational and legal approaches of the Trust to date and its thoughts on future changes. The meetings with other organisations and individuals related to their lived experiences and thoughts, coming out from the stakeholder engagement. These meetings were held informally and without minutes so that the participant could speak freely. To assist with this, the Commission had agreed at the outset with the participant that the meeting would be held confidential by the Commission but the participant would not be constrained similarly if they wished to comment on the meeting. As a result, these meetings have not been minuted.	
External Communications and FOI requests		
46/25	The Commission noted recent external communications, which included two letters addressed to the Trust from MP's citing constituency concerns over possible reforms following Commission recommendations. In addition, it was noted that the question of Trust powers in relation to abandoned boats was also raised in Parliament recently.	
47/25	In response to a request from the Commission, the meeting was provided with an updated schedule of FOI questions and responses received by the Trust relating to the work of the Commission (redacted to remove personal information). The Commission had requested this information as part of its research as it believed that many of the requests may relate to information it should also be provided with and take into consideration.	

Boat Licensing Enforcement Discussions		
48/25	Trust colleagues were invited to join the call in order to answer questions from the Commission about the detail of the Trust's boat licensing enforcement processes.	
Approach of Other Navigation Authorities and Previous Reform Consideration		
49/25	Simon Salem joined the call to discuss the approaches of other navigation authorities and jurisdiction, particularly in France and the Netherlands, as well as previous reform consideration during his time with British Waterways and the Trust.	