

## **Managing moorings on London's busy waterways**

### **Short stay mooring consultation Report**

August 2023

#### 1. Introduction

Between 7 December 2021 and 5 April 2022, the Canal & River Trust carried out a consultation on proposals to manage short-stay moorings on London's busy waterways. The proposal included,

- Increase the number of paid for, pre-booked short-stay visitor moorings with income, enabling better management of these sites with increased towpath rangers
- Introduce variable price bands on the pre-booked short-stay visitor moorings to reflect their location and popularity, and in some locations seasonal demand.
- Better management of all moorings in busier areas with the introduction of more frequent sightings during the busier summer months, limiting the number of times a boat could stay on paid for pre-booked visitor moorings in London and increasing the daily overstay charge (currently set at £25 for each extra day) on paid for, pre-booked visitor moorings and free to use short-stay visitor moorings.
- Extend the overstay charge to boats that moor for prolonged periods and/or overnight at lock landings or customer service facilities
- Ban Triple mooring and double moorings against wide beam boats on the Regents Canal, Hertford Union and Limehouse Cut

#### 2. Consultation response

The consultation was carried out via an online survey. Responses were obtained by self-selecting respondents via a link promoted on the Trust's website, through boating communication, social media and via a press release.

There were 1014 responses to the consultation.

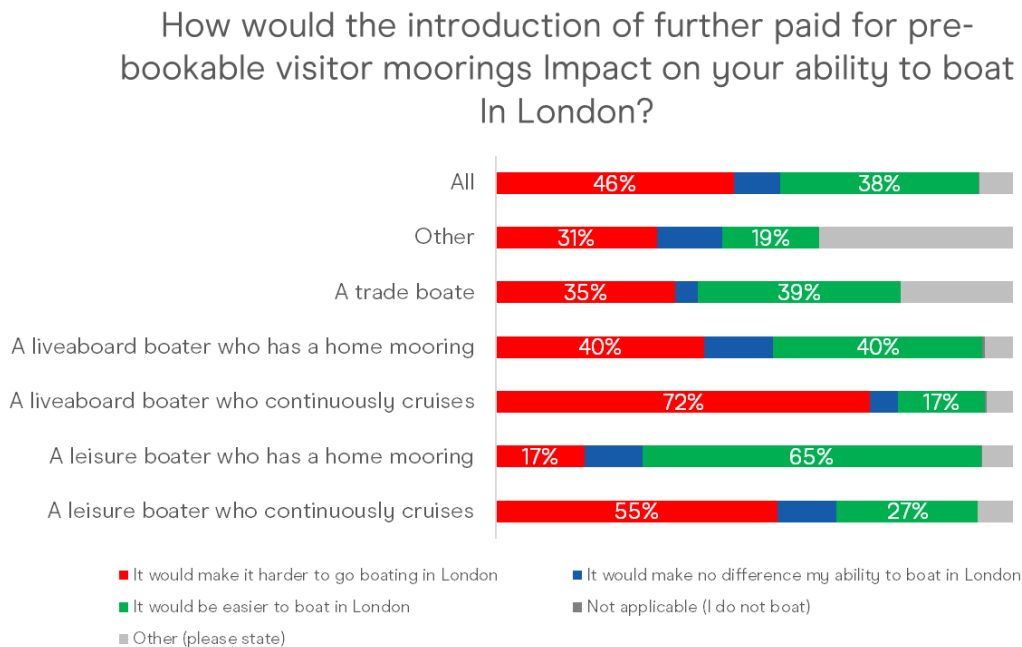
- 96% of responses were from boaters, 55% of whom said their boat was their permanent home.
- The largest response was from boaters with narrow boats (82.8%), followed by boaters with wide beam boats (10%) and finally those with motor cruisers (4.8%).
- 2.4% of boaters selected 'other' which included Dutch barges and sailing yachts.
- The majority of liveaboard boaters were on narrow boats.

- Liveaboard boaters without a mooring (continuous cruisers), who were using their boats as permanent homes were much more likely to have owned their boat for a shorter length of time, with 52% having owned their boat for three or less years.

### 3. Consultation findings

We asked how the introduction of further paid for, pre-bookable visitor moorings impact on your ability to boat in London.

Overall boaters are polarized on this question, however a majority (46%) said it would make it more difficult to boat in London, with 38% saying it would make it easier, 9% said it would make no difference. The responses were heavily split by different boater type. A large majority of liveaboard boaters who continuously cruise (72%) said the proposals would make it more difficult for them, whereas a large majority of leisure boaters who had a home mooring (65%) said it would make it easier. Those using their boats principally as a permanent home were those most likely to say the proposals would make their boating in London more difficult.



There were many comments, both opposed and in favour of the proposals.

Examples of comments opposed to the proposals

*'I oppose these plans. It is essential to recognise that boats are homes for existing live aboard people. Secondly, boats offer lower cost housing solutions for a very expensive city.'*

*'Do not agree with having to pay (above the cost of administration) for pre bookable moorings.'*

*'The object of the exercise should be making moorings available for boats, already having paid a considerable licence fee'*

## Examples of comments supportive of the proposals

*'Agree strongly with providing more bookable visitor moorings. Visiting London waterways, boats should not be penalised for wanting to visit London but are prevented from doing so because of the fear of arriving and being unable to find any moorings on arrival, because folk have turned London's waterways into a floating housing estate.'*

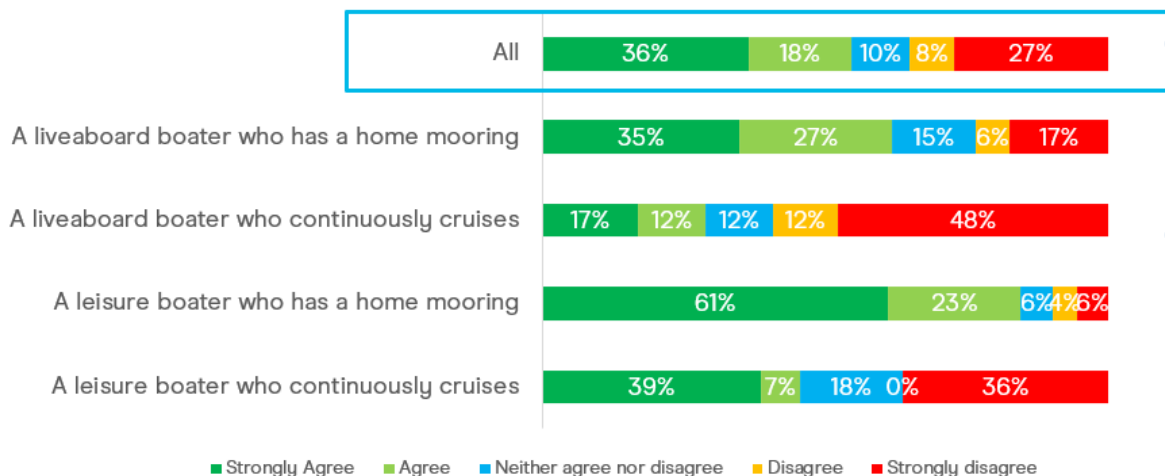
*'It is not a pleasant situation to arrive in London area in a late afternoon and not be able to find a safe mooring for the night.'*

## Additional towpath rangers and more frequent sightings

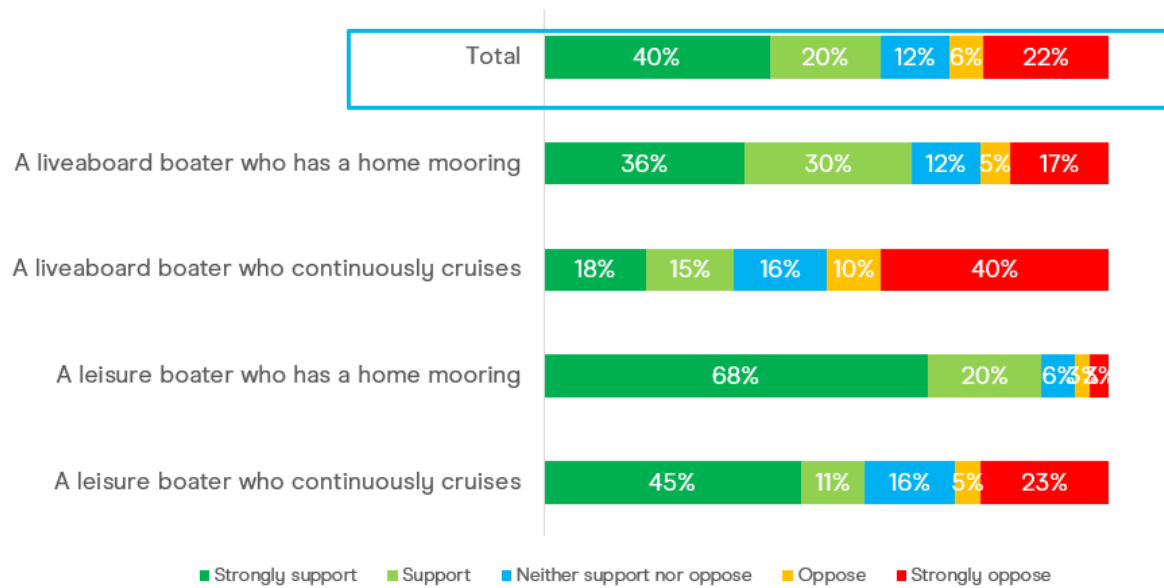
1. We asked what people thought of our proposals to help better manage all other mooring space in busy areas. We proposed.
  - Introducing more towpath rangers and more frequent sightings during the busier summer months
  - Limiting the number of times a boat could stay on paid for pre-booked visitor moorings in London
  - Increasing the daily overstay charge (currently set at £25 for each extra day) on paid for pre-booked visitor moorings and free to use short-stay visitor moorings.
  - Extending the overstay charge to boats that moor for prolonged periods and/or overnight at lock landings or customer service facilities

## More towpath rangers and more frequent sightings

There was a majority (54%) of respondents in favour of introducing more towpath rangers. Most support was from leisure boaters with moorings (83%) and least support from liveaboard Boaters who continuously cruise (29%)

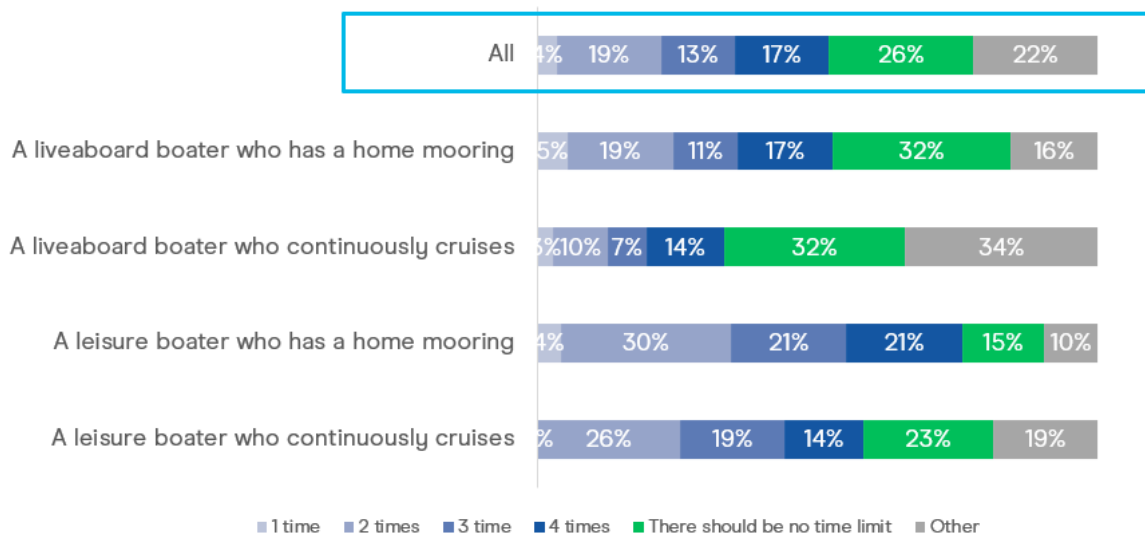


An overall majority of respondents, 60% of respondents were supportive of introducing more frequent sightings during the summer months. Those whose boat was their permanent home were far less supportive (40%) compared with leisure boaters (89%) who were strongly supportive of daily sightings.



## Limiting use of pre-bookable short-stay moorings

Most respondents, 52% of respondents were supportive of limiting use of pre-bookable short-stay moorings. Continuous cruiser boaters were less supportive than boaters with a permanent mooring. There were different views on what limit there should be on the number of times boaters might be able to use pre-bookable short stay mooring, with suggestions ranging from 1 to 4 times in a year. A significant minority (48%) were opposed to any limit.



## Overstay charges

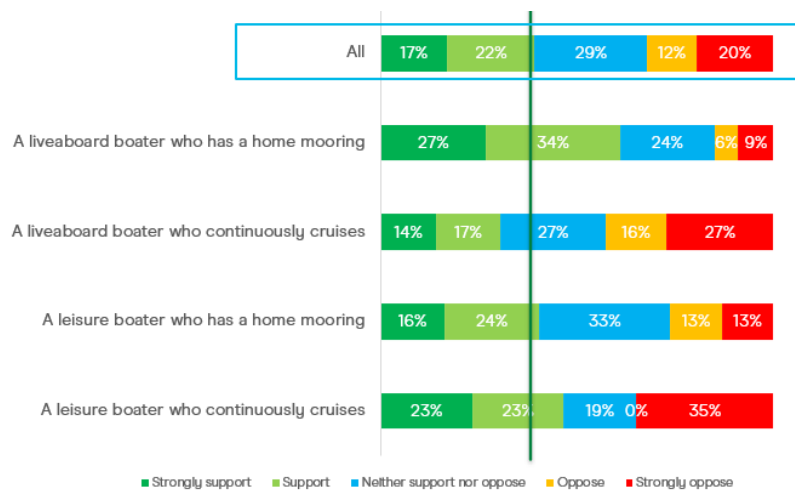
As part of increased monitoring and management we will increase the daily unauthorised extended stay charge at pre-bookable moorings in London to £50 and we will extend this charge to boats moored at facilities when not using the facilities.

## Reduce risk of obstruction to the navigation

We asked what people thought of the proposal to ban Triple mooring of all boats and double mooring against wide beam boats in central London

- Ban Triple mooring and double moorings against wide beam boats on the Regents Canal, Hertford Union and Limehouse Cut

A majority of respondents, 59% of respondents were supportive of banning triple mooring or double mooring against wide beam boats. Highest support (84%) came from leisure boaters and the lowest support (33%) came from those using their boats as temporary homes when at work.



#### 4. Conclusion and next steps

The consultation findings show a clear split in opinion between those who support (largely leisure boaters) and those who oppose (largely liveaboard boaters) the proposals. However, on balance we believe that there is a need to better manage the small number of short stay moorings in London to help balance the needs of all boaters.

We believe that the increase in pre-bookable paid for short-stay moorings will make it easier for boats visiting and navigating through London to guarantee finding a mooring space, without affecting the majority of mooring space. The proposals would still leave over 90% of mooring space in London available to moor on for free, for up to 14 days. We believe that introducing more pre-bookable paid for mooring will help balance the needs of visiting boaters with those predominant based upon the London waterways.

We will phase the introduction of additional pre-bookable charged for short stay moorings at existing visitor mooring sites in London beginning in Little Venice and Paddington Basin from August 2023. We will monitor the new pre-bookable mooring sites before confirming the timetable for the roll out of further sites.

A variable pricing structure at different pre-book short-stay mooring sites will be introduced from August 2023.

Additional towpath rangers will begin to take additional daily sightings at short-stay mooring sites from August 2023.

The unauthorised mooring/overstay charge at pre-bookable short-stay moorings will be increased to twice the amount charged for the pre-bookable short-stay mooring (for example at a site that is £25 the unauthorised mooring/overstay charge would be £50)

There will not be a limit on the number of times a pre-bookable short-stay mooring site can be booked but there will be a maximum number of days the site can be moored at in a single visit.

Triple mooring and double moorings against wide beam boats on the Regents Canal, Hertford Union and Limehouse Cut will not be permitted, this will be managed through the existing improper mooring process.