



SE MOORING CONSULTATION BERKHAMSTED / MARSWORTH

02 March 2016

The consultation ran from 22 December 2015 to 29 February 2016. There was a total of 807 responses to the consultation. 789 people gave a response about the proposals for Berkhamsted, 688 people gave a response to the proposals for Marsworth.

When asked 'Please tell us which of the following best reflects your view on the proposed changes to moorings?' the breakdown of the responses were as follows

	I support the proposals	I Neither support or oppose the proposals	I Oppose the proposals	No opinion
Berkhamsted	114 (14.5%)	32 (4%)	634 (80.5%)	9 (1%)
Marsworth	99 (14.5%)	34 (5%)	519 (75.5%)	36 (5%)

788 respondents answers the question asking then in what capacity they were commenting (119 respondents identified more than one option).

A boater with a home mooring	245
A boater without a home mooring	273
A roving trader boater	33
A boating business	11
Other canal user (for example angler, pedestrian, cyclist)	186
Canal side resident	85
Organisation	10
Other	64

529 respondents gave comments on a number of specific issues. The following is a summary of the main issues and questions raised. A number of respondents simply stated that they opposed the proposals with no further detail.

Issues comments related to the proposals at all locations

Issue / comment	Number respondents who raised this
The proposals would negatively impact on boaters (especially continuous cruisers/those who live aboard) by reducing the places they could moor / would force them to get moorings	99
There is not a shortage of mooring in the area where the changes are proposed / current mooring stay times are acceptable	86

I oppose any restrictions of less than 14 days/I believe that any restrictions of less than 14 days are illegal	45
Insufficient data or evidence provided to understand the justification for the changes proposed.	41
Better monitoring and enforcement of the 14 day stay times/behaviour is required	35
Reducing stay times here will have a negative knock-on impact elsewhere (several respondents named Cow Roast) / have an impact on increased use of locks and other infrastructure.	30
The proposals are excessive, only a short section of short stay mooring is necessary/helpful	22
Short stay mooring is needed to enable continuous cruising/accommodate hire boats/visitors by making it easier to find moorings/visit these locations	21
Concern that the proposals are in response to complaints from a small number of residents/local organisations and not based on mooring need	15
There should be short stay mooring of up to 7 days	14
Short stay moorings are not needed in winter	14
Proposals will not reduce/may increase noise and pollution problems	13
The proposals would not address congestion	13
There needs to be more dredging/towpath improvements to increase places where boats can moor	13
The proposals are a reasonable compromise	10
The proposals would restrict my ability to moor/stay in these locations	5
There should be no mooring signs on winding hole, lock landings and bridge approaches	3
Increasing short stay times will lead to less boats and make the canal less safe/increase the risk of vandalism	3
The proposals are about making money for CRT	3
The proposals would negatively affect trade boats	2
Provide more 14 day towpath mooring	2
Short stay times are also needed at other locations	1
Long term mooring causes parking problems on nearby streets	1

Berkhamsted specific comments

The proposals would have a negative impact on local business/stop people from visiting Berkhamsted	25
There should only be short stay moorings of 2 or 7 day in Berkhamsted, there should not be any 14 day mooring in the town.	18
We want/like to see boats moored in Berkhamsted	18
A short stay shopping mooring by Waitrose would be helpful	5

Marsworth specific comments

Reduce permanent (permit holder) moorings at Marsworth to create more 2/7 day mooring space	2
A designated lock landing is needed below lock 39 at Marsworth	1

Braunston specific comments

Enforcing Braunston stay times is a good idea	2
Braunston needs some short stay mooring all year	1

Summary of responses received from the following organisations

Berkhamsted Citizens Association – Oppose the proposals. ‘It should be 2 days [from Waitrose] all year to Ravens lane to stop overstayers

Berkhamsted Town Council – In favour of the proposals. ‘Berkhamsted Town Council strongly rejects any 14 day mooring within the Berkhamsted area. It supports 2 day mooring from The Moor/Castle Street bridge to Lock 54, and 7 day mooring elsewhere.’

Inland Waterway Association (IWA) – In favour of the proposals. [The proposals are] very necessary to promote cruising use by visitors’

National Bargee Travellers Association (NBTA) – Opposed to the proposals. ‘To reduce the stay time on moorings that are now available for the full 14 days to 7 days or 48 hours to the extent that is proposed in this consultation will have a very significant adverse effect on boat dwellers without home moorings. The National Bargee Travellers Association is opposed to any reduction in mooring time limits of less than 14 days.’

Many individual respondents identified that they were members of one or more national boating organisation including IWA, NBTA. Historic Narrow Boat Club, National Association of Boat Owners

Response to the consultation

Berkhamsted

Following further analysis of boat sighting information (see Appendix 1) and considering the responses to the consultation, the proposed 2 day and 7 short-stay day will not be introduced. The consultation response does show some support for a number of smaller changes which will be introduced on a trial basis and monitored for a year. These will include,

- A 4 hour stop and shop mooring of approximately 210ft beside Waitrose. These restrictions will be restricted to the hours of 7am – 9pm. Overnight mooring will be permitted.
- The winding hole close to Berkhamsted station will be signed as ‘no mooring’.
- To maintain access a short section of towpath adjacent to the dry dock between bridge 141 and lock 54 will be signed at ‘no mooring’.
- All other sections of CRT towpath will remain as 14 day and will continue to be monitored to ensure compliance with statutory boat movement requirements.

These changes will be implemented by summer 2016 and reviewed in 12 months.

Marsworth

Following further analysis of boat sighting information (see separate report) and considering the responses to the consultation, the proposed 2 day short-stay day will not be introduced. Mooring

chains are to be reinstated beside the CSF; and reinstating signage on the section of canal from the Aylesbury Arm junction to Bridge 131 to highlight angling and no mooring zones..

Batchworth (Rickmansworth)

No changes are proposed at Batchworth

Braunston

No changes are proposed to the mooring stay times at Braunston. Volunteer mooring rangers will continue to monitor moorings at Braunston to help ensure the moorings are available for as many boaters as possible.

31st March 2016

Appendix 1

South East Moorings Consultation 2016

Background

There are at least 850 moorings with short stay times on Canal & River Trust (CRT) navigation. However the precise number is not known as many short-stay moorings have been installed over the years but some have not been accurately recorded on CRT GIS systems or SAP database. Historically some short-stay moorings were created in a haphazard fashion by different waterway regions within British Waterways.

The South East Waterways is one of CRT's busiest waterways. In 2013 in response to complaints about congestion at moorings the then waterway manager proposed introducing new shorter stay times at a large number of visitor moorings. The proposals were unpopular with a large number of boaters and resulted in CRT withdrawing most of the proposals. A small visitor mooring pilot scheme was initiated at three sites (Foxton Locks, Stoke Bruerne and Thrupp), in addition 7 other busy visitor moorings were identified using CRT boat sighting data and CRT began collecting additional boat sighting data at these sites to understand how the moorings were being used.

In 2015 CRT worked with its Navigation Advisory Group to agree a Short Term Mooring Framework that set out a process that would be followed before any changes were made to existing moorings. The framework sets out how evidence should be gathered and a clear case made for why any changes should be made to moorings.

Consultation at Berkhamsted and Marsworth

Between December 2015 and February 2016 CRT undertook a consultation on proposals to introduce short stay moorings at Berkhamsted and Marsworth. The proposals for 2 day moorings at Marsworth and 2 day / 7 day moorings at Berkhamsted were put forward based on sightings carried out between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015.

The consultation received over 800 responses, with over 400 individual comments. This high level of responses, more than most recent national CRT consultations receive, reflects the strong feelings about any changes to moorings. A majority of respondents objected to the proposals.

Of the respondents to the consultation on the Berkhamsted proposals 114 (14.5%) supported the proposals, 634 (80.5%) opposed the proposals, 32 (4%), neither supported or opposed the proposals and the remaining 9 (1%) gave no opinion.

Of the respondents to the consultation on the Marsworth proposals 99 (14.5%) supported the proposals, 519 (75.5%) opposed the proposals, 34 (5%) neither supported or opposed the proposals and the remaining 36 (5%) gave no opinion.

The key issues that were raised in the comments (by 30 or more respondents) were:

- The proposals would negatively impact on boaters (especially continuous cruisers/those who live aboard) by reducing the places they could moor / would force them to get moorings (99 comments)
- There is not a shortage of mooring in the area where the changes are proposed / current mooring stay times are acceptable (86 comments)
- Oppose any restrictions of less than 14 days/believe that any restrictions of less than 14 days are illegal (45 comments)
- Insufficient data or evidence provided to understand the justification for the changes proposed (41 comments)
- Better monitoring and enforcement of the 14 day stay times/behaviour is required (35 comments)
- Reducing stay times here will have a negative knock-on impact elsewhere (several respondents named Cow Roast) / have an impact on increased use of locks and other infrastructure. (31 comments)

A number of other comments were received, these are summarised in the consultation report.

Following discussions with the Navigation Advisory Group (License and Moorings) meeting in February 2016 CRT agreed to undertake further work with a NAG representative to look in more detail at the boat sighting data at Berkhamsted and Marsworth. The following report sets out a further breakdown of the boat sighting data for Berkhamsted and Marsworth during the peak season months of May – August 2015.

Berkhamsted

Further independent analysis of the sighting data has now been undertaken by Tim Parker, a member of the Navigation Advisory Group (Licensing and Moorings). Using the sighting data for the busiest months May to August 2015 for the two kilometre lengths that cover Berkhamsted GU-168 and GU-169. This analysis has looked at more detail of the number of boats moored and the average length of the boats against the length of available mooring. The results are as follows :

May									Average
GU-168	17	20	21	19	17	12	16	14	17
GU-169	9	3	8	2	2	6	3	10	5
June									
GU-168	21	16	8	14	20	16	17		16
GU-169	13	17	10	8	13	10	8	12	11
July									
GU-168	14	10	12	4	12	11	12	12	11
GU-169	12	6	16	2	12	12	9	10	10

August

GU-168	18	18	22	26	19	17	20	22	20		20
GU-169	1	12	9	12	23	16	40	21	22	22	18

The average boat length was checked against the CRT licence database and was found to be 55ft (in the sample, slightly lower in GU-168 and higher GU-169)

It was considered that there are approximately 1,600 useable feet in GU-168 and 2,150ft on GU-169.

From this it is possible to work out the average percentage utilisation of both GU-168 and GU-169 for each month :

May

GU-168	58.4%	Number of times over 60% full - 3 from 8 sightings
GU-169	12.8%	Number of times over 60% full - nil

June

GU-168	55.0%	Number of times over 60% full - 2 from 7
GU-169	28.1%	Number of times over 60% full - Nil

July

GU-168	37.8%	Number of times over 60% full - Nil
GU-169	25.6%	Number of times over 60% full - Nil

August

GU-168	68.7%	Number of times over 60% full - 8 from 9
GU-169	46.0%	Number of times over 60% full – 2 from 10

Two figures that stood out from the general pattern were the figure of 40 boats on GU-169 in August and the lower number of boat sightings for July at what would be part of the high summer season. Both were double checked and found to be correct. Part of the reason for the 40 figure was pairs of boats double breasted.

It is important to note that it would be difficult to get 100% utilisation of any space unless there was a full time moorings warden directing boats which is neither sensible nor cost effective. So a percentage of utilisable space has to be estimated and this will vary on a daily basis depending on whether boaters have moored 'tidily'. The figure of 60% has been used as a rough benchmark of a mooring being 'badly filled' (17.5 boats on GU-168 and 23 on GU-169)

In addition to these figures the number of 14 day reminders sent to boats sighted as having been moored for more than 14 days in GU168/169 were also reviewed). These showed the following :-

	GU-168	GU-169
May	0	1
June	1	3
July	0	1
August	0	3

There would be little effect on the utilisation figures on GU-168 and rather more on GU-169

48 boats were found to have been counted frequently during the period May to August, and questions were asked of enforcement whether these were complying with their licence requirements. Of these 23 were in receipt of enforcement action. It was not possible to easily allocate these as they had been sighted on both GU168 and GU169. Boats making multiple and frequent return visits to Berkhamsted would have an effect on the figures and would raise questions about the fair sharing of mooring space. Maximum stays of 14 days per month would appear sensible to counter-act any abuse, as suggested in the consultation document.

An analysis was undertaken to try and ascertain the average dwell times on each of the sites. This could never be totally accurate as sightings did not take place each day, but a pattern can be detected. This is important to know as, to take an extreme, if everyone stays for exactly 7 days, reducing stay times from 14 days to 7 days will have no effect. However, if everyone stays for 10 days, a lot of space will be released, if the time allowed is reduced from 14 days to 7 days.

The figures obtained from CRT showed the following :-

GU-168

2 days or less	61.3%
3 days to 7 days	3.2%
Over 7 days	35.5%

GU-169

2 days or less	68.2%
3 days to 7 days	Nil
Over 7 days	31.8%

It should be stressed that these figures are indicative only

Other factors

Historically Berkhamsted has been very supportive of the canal and has invested large amounts of money over the years, particularly on the towpath and canal environs. However there have on occasion been conflicts between canal users and residents. It is important to take into consideration comments from neighbours and the council (as per the protocol) There have been

complaints concerning noise (running engines late) and smoke. There were also problems over winter 2014/2015 when the Winter Mooring Permits (WMP) resulted in many boaters who had purchased general towpath Winter Mooring Permits (WMP) mooring for most of the winter in Berkhamsted due to its proximity to the station and other services. This was overcome in 2015/2016 as there are no longer general towpath winter mooring permits with only a limited number of fixed location WMPs now sited in Berkhamsted.

Consideration could perhaps be given to making Berkhamsted a ‘quiet’ zone as has been trialled successfully in parts of London and on the Kennet & Avon. This would also include a voluntary request that only smokeless fuel be burnt within the town which is a smokeless zone (there is no legal requirement to do this as boats are exempt from the Clean Air Act).

Based on the review of the boat sighting evidence above, the suggestion would be that part of GU-168 be reduced to 7 days (1 April – 31 October) where the evidence is stronger for a reduction. Consideration should be given to a ‘stop to shop’ zone of 4 hours close to Waitrose supermarket. There are mooring rings outside the Waitrose Supermarket on which around 3 boats could moor. This is less restrictive than initially suggested in the consultation, and it would perhaps be better to see whether a 7 day limit helps reduce concerns about congestion whilst still providing ample mooring space for those who want to moor in Berkhamsted for up to 14 days. It is recommended that the moorings revert to 14 days from November to March.

The evidence would tend to indicate and that GU-169 should remain at 14 days.

Sightings will continue to be taken during the boating season of 2016 and these should be analysed during the winter of 2016/2017 to see whether these changes have been effective, and based on that evidence changes might be looked at for the 2017 season if there is still a congestion problem.

Marsworth

Analysis was undertaken on length GU-158, as per the protocol, for the months May to August. The boat numbers are as follows :-

May											Average
10	19	23	24	15	21	18	28	16	14	13	18
June											
24	17	14	13	20	17	18	22	17	18	21	21
1	16	20									17
July											
25	10	16	16	13	23	22	8	11	16	24	17

17 29 18

August

9 12 15 14 9 12 18 18 20 19 22 10 15

Surprisingly, the busiest month at Marsworth was July, in contrast with Berkhamsted, where it was August.

The average boat length was assumed to be the same as Berkhamsted at 55ft

There was a complication on the usable length of GU-158, in that the local fishing club stated that in their agreement with British Waterways, it was agreed that there would be no moorings in the length opposite the new housing development. Whilst this has not yet been accepted by CRT, there were old 'No Mooring' signs on that stretch (none currently). For that reason this length has been excluded (giving a worst case scenario) and the useable length has been calculated at 2,280ft.

Using the 60% (badly moored) rule, used in Berkhamsted, this would give 25 boats as being full. There is only one sighting of this figure or more for May, none for June, two for July and none for August.

In addition, there were again, as in Berkhamsted, a number of sightings of boats which were in the enforcement process. If these were resolved, the numbers sighted could fall.

It is obvious that there is not a general problem of mooring at Marsworth and for this reason, dwell times were not investigated.

However, what is being suggested at Marsworth is not a general restriction on moorings, but a selective reduction on 3 sites within GU-158. Unfortunately the evidence does not show conclusively whether those parts of the site were congested or not, as the boat sightings above were over the whole of the length. This means that there is not the evidence to back up the reduction suggested, and the objective decision becomes a subjective one. The whole purpose of the protocol was to get away from this and make everything evidence based.

CRT have been able to produce some more precise evidence on the length between Bridges 131 and 132A, which has 1192 feet of possible moorings, as follows :-

May											Average
5	4	1	6	9	10	7	3	4			5
June											
8	9	7	8	9	7	8	2	12	11	7	8

July

10 4 7 9 6 8 8 4 9 12 10 8
12 8

August

2 2 6 8 10 6 6 8 4 6 6

Using the 60% 'bad mooring' as a yardstick, this shows that the 'full' number is 13 boats, which did not occur during the period under review. However, if the fishing club length is excluded of 197ft, the usable length reduces to 995 ft, which gives a 'full' number of 11 boats, which does. Of course, if this does happen, there is no proof that the displaced boats would stay in that part of the section rather than travel through the bridge to the 14 day part.

There was no further evidence produced on the length opposite the Red Lion which is suggested at 2 days.

It is suggested that boat sightings be taken during the summer of 2016 for GU-158, but that the numbers be split to show the numbers in the 3 different sections (Each end of the site, suggested as 2 days, and the middle section, suggested as remaining 14 days) and for that evidence to be used to determine whether any restrictions be brought in at the start of the 2017 season.

Tim Parker
March 2016