



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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12 May 2016

### **CANAL & RIVER TRUST 2016 NATIONAL BOAT COUNT SHOWS REDUCTION IN LICENCE EVASION**

The Canal & River Trust's annual national boat count shows that licence evasion on its waterways has reduced by 0.2% in the past year to 4.4%, with 95.6% of boats holding up-to-date licences. This is the seventh year the rate has stayed below 5%.

The national boat count also paints a picture of the changing numbers of boats across the country. London has seen an increase of just over 400 boats, with numbers in the south west and south east also rising, while other areas reduced by almost the same amount.

Mike Grimes, head of boating at Canal & River Trust, said: "I'm pleased that licence evasion continues to remain below 5%. The contribution boaters make to our canals and rivers helps fund their vital upkeep and it's important for everyone to play their part. I'd like to thank our enforcement team for their sterling work in helping protect the income that goes towards looking after the waterways for the benefit of all boaters. There's also an important safety aspect: if a boat isn't licensed we can't know that it's safe, which poses a risk for both the boat owner and other boaters.

"While evasion has fallen slightly, it is disappointing to see a small minority taking the benefits of boating on the waterways without putting anything back to fund their upkeep. In 2015/16, we had to remove 90 boats from our canals and rivers as they were unlicensed or in breach of our terms and conditions.

"The national boat count also suggests that the popularity of boating in places like London is continuing to grow. We can't, and wouldn't want, to stop boats visiting but we would encourage all boaters in congested areas to share the space fairly, respect mooring and cruising guidelines and be considerate of their neighbours."

The annual survey was completed in March, with Trust staff identifying boats on waterways across England & Wales. It provides a comprehensive snap-shot of licence evasion, with the information used to support the day-to-day enforcement work carried out by the Trust.

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Patron: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. Canal & River Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with company number 7807276 and registered charity number 1146792, registered office address: First Floor North, Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1BB

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### Notes to editors

Area	Evasion
Central/East	4.5%
Lon	5.2%
Nth	5.9%
NW&Mids	3.8%
SE	2.1%
SW	5.2%
Total	4.4%