



Boaters' Update 30 June 2017

Welcome to the last edition of the first half of 2017! Hasn't it gone quick? The good thing is that, as far as the boating calendar is concerned, arguably the best half of the year is yet to come.

So, not wanting to keep you too long from your local canal or river, please have a quick read of this latest update. In it you'll find a report of the things we had to unexpectedly fix in May to keep the navigations open for you to enjoy. There's also a rundown of the questions (and answers) boaters have been most frequently asking our customer service team and news of the transformation and reopening of the once-derelict waterways in East London.

Of course, you'll also find the usual mix of news and this weekend's stoppages as well as ways in which you can get involved. If there is something else you'd like to see in a future edition, then do [get in touch](#).

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Happy boating,

Damian

News round-up and the fortnight ahead

Over the last couple of weeks you may have heard, or seen, that:

- 13 Jun – We announced that we're looking for [volunteers who can help teach school children](#) about some of Staffordshire's most historic and popular canal-side spots.
- 13 Jun – A ten-year transformation project that restored derelict, virtually unnavigable waterways has opened up a new route in East London. [More on this below](#)
- 21 Jun – The Trust urged people to '[Share the Space, Drop your Pace](#)' on towpaths to help ensure they remain special and as safe as possible.
- 26 Jun – Details of [The Ring](#) - a major arts programme that will celebrate the rebirth of an historic 21-mile cruising ring in Worcestershire - were announced.

As we move into summer it just gets busier on and around the waterways. You'll find some highlights below but there are plenty of other activities and volunteering opportunities around the network: visit the [events section of the website](#) to find the perfect one for you.

- 30 Jun to 2 Jul – On and around the River Stort you'll find the [Ware Boat Festival](#) with, as you may have guessed, boat trips, parades and even a boat handling competition (among others!)



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- 1 & 2 Jul – Another river will be playing host this weekend as it's the ninth [Stratford-Upon-Avon River Festival](#) with live bands, boat parades and fireworks.
- 3 Jul – Step down into a rarely seen and exposed lock chamber this Sunday at the [Thornton Lock Open Day](#) and take a closer look at the work that has been carried out by us and the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society.
- 8 Jul – The [Bugsworth Basin Fun Day](#) (Peak Forest Canal) is where it's at for lots of children's activities as well as, to name just a couple, a fun dog show and floating market.

What went wrong in May

This regular column looks back at the previous month to see what things the Canal & River Trust had to unexpectedly fix to keep canals and rivers open for you to enjoy. As the saying goes, a stitch in time saves nine, and for the third month in a row, our proactive maintenance regime, including all the winter repair works, meant closures were relatively few and far between.

Across the entire 2,000 miles of rivers and canals that we look after, there were only four instances of a canal or river being closed to navigation for more than 48 hours. Totalled up, 23 days were spent repairing these four, unexpected, stoppages.

The main issue we dealt with was finding, and repairing, a leak on the Macclesfield Canal which took 12 days. Another eight were spent fixing locks while an unusually large fallen tree on the Leeds & Liverpool took contractors four days to clear.

If you've [signed up to receive stoppages](#) you'll notice that we categorise them in to general reasons, such as repair, inspection or vegetation.

Of course, when we're dealing with such old structures, it's not always as straightforward as 'repair' so we offer more detail in the body of the stoppage notice. But, in case you were wondering, here's [a handy guide](#) to what we classify as a repair, maintenance, inspection and so on.

Transformation of derelict East London waterways complete

Are you contemplating boating in the Big Smoke this summer? Well, if so, you've picked a good year. For the first time in a generation the Canal & River Trust and London Legacy Development Corporation are welcoming boaters back to the Bow Back Rivers that run through East London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, after a ten-year transformation project that has turned the derelict, virtually unnavigable waterways into a major new route for the capital.

Jon Guest, London waterway manager, said: "The transformation of the area has been incredible. Those with long memories will remember that the rivers in this part of the East End were all but unnavigable, subject to the tides and full of fly-tipped fridges, cars and tyres. I'm over the moon to see the changes and I'm excited for everyone who will get to



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explore them, at a time when the capital's canals and rivers are arguably more popular than any time in history.”

Jon's enthusiasm is apparent in this video as he talks about the history, and regeneration, of the waterways:

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/XPjs4GfK5io>

In early July the Loop of waterways around the London Stadium, which includes the Old River Lea, City Mill River and St Thomas Creek, will open to public navigation for cruising without the need for prior booking. Later, at the end of August, Carpenters Road Lock also officially opens. It's good to know that we're also planning to create a 100-metre stretch of short stay visitor moorings on a currently unmoorable length of towpath on the Lee Navigation near the Hertford Union Canal.

As boaters may be journeying from far afield to visit the Park some of the new moorings will be pre-bookable to guarantee travellers a place to pull up. Boaters will be able to reserve a spot at the pre-bookable moorings for up to seven days at a cost of £10 per night with the other spots free for up to a two-day stay. These moorings will be available by the end of the year.

You might also be interested, as we celebrate the £1.8million restoration of [Carpenters Road Lock](#), in coming along to the first ever [East London Waterways Festival](#) at the end of the August. If you want more information about the festival please [drop a line](#) to heritage activities officer Joanna Steele. [Read below](#) for details of how you can get involved.

For more information about the waterways in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park visit the [dedicated section of the website](#).

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Your frequently asked questions

It's that time again – every month or so I go cap in hand to our lovely customer service team with one question: What have boaters been asking you about? In return I get a list of questions that you've been asking most frequently.

In the hope that this saves some of you the job of calling customer services with the same question, I've reproduced them, along with their answers, below:

Do I still receive a copy of the Boat Safety Scheme Certificate once the boat has passed the examination?

As you'll know your boat requires a Boat Safety Examination at least every four years. When examined you should be given either an electronic or paper copy (sometimes both) by the examiner. We have access to the examination database so can see the details, but if you weren't issued a copy of the report then you need to contact your examiner. You can view details of your boat's most recent examination via [our licensing website](#). If you'd like to read more, visit the [BSS website](#) for more information.



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If I sell my boat and I am owed a refund on my licence, how do I know it will be processed and how long will that take?

If you've sold your boat, before we can process your refund, we need the details of the new owner, this includes their contact details. So, if you're able to provide these details to us when you tell us that you've sold the boat this will speed up your refund. Once we have them (either from you or directly from the new owner) it's now a straightforward automated process and our boat licensing team will usually be able to get your refunded money to you within fifteen working days, by cheque or back into your bank account by BACS payment.

Why do I still need to display my licence discs but not my mooring permits?

Firstly, it's correct that mooring permits are no longer required so you won't be sent one out next time you renew your mooring and, naturally, we don't ask you to display them either. However, we do still require you to display your boat's licence discs, one on each side of the boat. You may have noticed that since introducing our new online licensing, we no longer automatically post out your licence discs. Instead, at the end of a successful application, a set of printable licence discs are emailed. If you have trouble printing them or don't have access to a printer then we can do this for you, just [get in touch with our customer service team](#) or visit your local office.

Can you recommend anyone for insurance?

While we do not provide insurance, and do not recommend a provider, you can make a quick search on the internet. If you use the search term 'narrowboat insurance', you will find that it brings up plenty of choices to consider. We do have some [general information on boat insurance](#) on our website, which you may also find helpful.

If I sell my boat and there's some unused months left on its licence, can I transfer this to the new owner with the boat?

The only types of transferrable licence are River Only, three-month Canal & River, and Gold, as these are non-refundable. All other Canal & River licences (six and twelve months) are non-transferable. If you sell your boat we will issue a refund (see above) for any unused portions of the licence and the new owner will have to contact us to apply for a new licence.

More ways for you to get involved

Many boaters help keep canals and rivers in good condition by [volunteering](#) or [donating](#). As you're such an integral part of what makes waterways so wonderful, there're always other ways you can get involved:

- Winter stoppages – Thanks to everyone who took the time to give us their thoughts on the first draft of our plans for the winter maintenance and restoration programme. We're now reviewing the comments and in just over two weeks' time, on 16 July, we'll publish a revised programme for you to consider. At this point you'll get until 4 August to give us further thoughts which we'll review before publishing the final plan, a couple of weeks later, on 18 August.



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- You can be of the first boaters to pass under the only double radial lock gate in the country and join a wider celebration, in late August, of East London Waterways and the regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Waterways. If the weather's good enough there will also be the opportunity for an extension of the cruise to incorporate Bow Creek and the tidal Thames. If you're interested in taking part please send your boat name and index number to waterways@londonlegacy.co.uk
- Seen a boat stunningly bedecked with a dazzlingly display of flowers? If so, why not take a quick snap and post your photos on our website to give the green fingered boater the chance of a special prize. We've had quite a few posted already so if you're wondering [what the competition looks like](#)...- worth a look

Maintenance, repair and restoration work affecting cruising this weekend

Keeping your canals and rivers ready for you to enjoy is a year-round job. From time-to-time this includes some major engineering that we need to temporarily close the navigation for. Below you'll find a list, by region, of anything that's happen that may affect your cruising.

Just click on the one where you'll be and a webpage will open listing any stoppages for that region (if your region isn't listed then, yay, there aren't any navigation closures there!). If you're not quite sure which region your planned cruise falls in to please take a [look at this map](#).

- [Kennet & Avon](#)
- [Manchester, Pennines & Potteries](#)
- [North East](#)
- [North West](#)
- [West Midlands](#)

When any restrictions to navigation happen, we get them up on to our website as soon as we can – always best to [have a scan](#) before you set off for a cruise. If you have any questions about a specific closure then you'll find the email addresses for our regional offices [on our contacts page](#).

Bits and Bobs

- In the mood for some more reading? If so, you may want to visit the [boating team blog](#). Recent articles have covered everything from [arts on the water](#) and [engine maintenance](#) all the way through to [gardening on a boat](#) and [advice for new continuous cruisers](#).

Happy boating!

Damian