

PRESS RELEASE

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BOAT OWNERS' VIEWS SURVEY RESULTS

The headline results of the Canal & River Trust's latest Boat Owners' Views survey, that records boaters' opinions about the charity and the waterways it looks after, have been published today.

Overall, the findings show a decline in general satisfaction down from a record high in 2017.

Jon Horsfall, head of customer service support at Canal & River Trust, said: "We are disappointed in the drop in boater satisfaction. We recognise the past year has been one of change for our customers, including changes to the prompt payment discount and increased licence fees for boat owners with wider boats. We also acknowledge the impact of last year's drought and the effects of unpredictable infrastructure failures on customers throughout the year.

"This year's Annual Report will show that we're spending more on the waterways than ever before. We have more volunteers supporting our work as lock keepers as well as carrying out physical repairs to our network including the important task of cutting-back offside vegetation. Our £8m programme of dredging continues this year including £1 million for the Upper & Lower Peak Forest Canal, and feeder improvement work to help with our water management. In London we are working to manage unprecedented demand with new moorings and facilities, and alongside this we have our works programme of repairs and improvements across England and Wales which will see us complete the rebuilding of Hurleston Lock 4 on the Llangollen, as well as embankment repairs and leak reduction across the network.

"I thank everyone who has taken part in the survey and would like to give all our boating customers the assurance that boating and navigation is at the very heart of everything we do."

In 2019's survey 61% of boaters were satisfied with their experience of cruising the nation's waterways (2018: 70%). 58% of the 1,163 respondents said they would recommend the waterways to other boaters (2018: 76%). 69% rated the overall upkeep as OK to excellent (2018: 74%). 59% boaters feel they know the Trust very well or a fair amount (2018: 53%), 56% trust the charity to look after the waterways (2018: 62%), while 47% feel favourable to the Trust (2018: 54%).

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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

The survey carried out in March and April this year was sent to a third of the Trust's boat licence holders and received 1,163 responses.

Narrowboat owners were likely to be most positive, with 65% expressing satisfaction with their boating experience. Across the regions, boaters in the West Midlands and East Midlands were most satisfied, at 68% and 67% respectively, while continuous cruisers also expressed satisfaction levels of 65%. Boaters in Yorkshire & the North East were least satisfied, with only 48% expressing satisfaction.

The full Boat Owners' Views survey report will be published on the Trust's website in due course. Boaters can get in touch with the Trust by [filling out a webform](#), calling 0303 040 4040, tweeting [@CRTcontactus](#) or getting involved in a local user forum.

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