

# PRESS RELEASE

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## CANAL & RIVER TRUST SHARES HEADLINE RESULTS OF FIRST WATERWAY EXPERIENCE SURVEY PERIOD

The Canal & River Trust is today sharing the headline results of its new Waterway Experience survey, which is distributed in fortnightly waves between April and September and is designed to complement the annual Perception survey (formally Boat Owners' Views) by getting boaters' up-to-date feedback about the waterways they cruise.

The Trust is pleased to report that boaters' experiences have generally improved over the summer months. Boaters who are out cruising appear to be more satisfied, more likely to recommend the Trust's waterways, and have a more positive opinion of the overall upkeep of the waterways when their answers are compared to the annual Perception survey. The monthly survey is sent to a sample of all boaters sighted in each waterway region.

Boaters responding to the monthly survey are reporting greater satisfaction with their experience of cruising the Trust's waterways, with 67% saying they were very or slightly satisfied over the whole period compared to 61% in the annual perception survey. 69% of respondents would definitely or probably recommend the Trust's waterways to other boaters (perception survey: 58%). When it comes to the overall upkeep of the waterways, 31% of boaters rated them at eight or more (out of ten) compared to 19% in the perception survey.

The Waterway Experience survey also gave boaters the chance to comment on a variety of upkeep tasks and services the Trust provides. Boaters felt the Trust did well at managing congestion at locks, visitor moorings and other facilities, ensuring there were places to moor that were deep enough, providing short stay visitor moorings, keeping the grass verges cut, and the overall condition of locks. However the availability of facilities and keeping the towpath and waterways free from overhanging branches were the biggest problem areas, alongside dealing with non-compliant boaters and unlicensed boats. Keeping the water deep enough for cruising was both one of the highest praised and most criticised categories.

Matthew Symonds, national boating manager at Canal & River Trust, said: "While we can't directly compare the annual perception survey and the monthly waterway survey because the samples are different it's heartening that, when the questions asked on both surveys are looked at side

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by side, the results from the monthly survey appear to be more positive. It is interesting to see boaters that we know are out and about on the waterways are reporting a more satisfying experience than those who were asked to think back over the whole year.

“The survey has highlighted some of the areas where we need to do more. We’ve already addressed some of the issues as they’ve been highlighted throughout the summer and are working with our regional teams to consider and respond to the individual comments so we can work out how we can make things better for boaters. Thank you to every boater who has taken the time to let us know how they feel. We want boaters to enjoy the time they spend cruising and, working together, we believe we can target those areas most in need of attention.”

The full results of the Waterway Experience survey can be [found here](#).

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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**For further media requests please contact:**

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