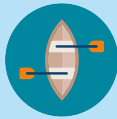




**Canal &  
River Trust**

Making life better by water

# Waterway Code for Anglers & Boaters





# Common Signs

Please understand and obey the signs, these are there for everyone's safety



Do not create a wash



No motor boats



No mooring



No unpowered craft



No personal water craft



No fishing



Winding point



Portage point



Mooring



Overhead cable



Strong currents



Power lines above

# Introduction

Our canals and rivers are a treasured resource for everyone to enjoy and share. With thousands of people fishing, boating and using the waterways for recreation, it's more important than ever that we all look after our waterways, consider others, take care and stay safe. Alongside our Towpath Code – [canalrivertrust.org.uk/our-towpath-code](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/our-towpath-code) – this Waterway Code for Anglers and Boaters sets out guidance to help ensure everyone is clear about what is expected of them. This guidance promotes considerate and courteous behaviour for us all.





# Advice for Everyone

## Look after your waterways and consider others

- Protect the environment and help to keep the waterways a pleasant place for all users and wildlife.
- Follow the Check, Clean, Dry Code to help prevent the spread of aquatic non-native invasive species. ([www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry)).
- Keep noise to a minimum.
- Don't damage the vegetation or banks.
- Take home everything that you brought with you and leave the site as you found it.
- If you have a dog make sure you clear up after it and keep it under control. It's advisable that they wear a doggy Personal Floatation Device (PFD), too!
- Don't light fires.

- Things can go wrong on canals; if you see something dangerous such as serious damage to a structure or water escaping call the Canal & River Trust emergency helpline **0800 47 999 47**. For other emergencies when lives are at risk (including serious injury, illness, fatality, rescue help, fire or explosion on a boat) call **999**. Use the what3words app to help define your location. All bridges and locks are numbered or named. To report non-emergency issues call the Canal & River Trust on **0303 040 4040** or contact us online [canalrivertrust.org.uk/contact-us](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/contact-us).
- Report pollution, fly tipping or fish in distress to the Environment Agency (in England) on **0800 80 7060** or Natural Resources Wales (in Wales) on **0300 65 3000**.
- Report birds or animals in distress to the RSPCA on **0300 1234 999**.

## Take Care

### Spot the dangers, for example...

- Always keep young children under supervision.
- Not all towpaths have smooth surfaces, take care when walking and cycling.
- Keep off the ice. If the water appears frozen, never trust the ice to take your weight.
- Watch out for concealed mooring pins (especially in long grass) or ropes near the path beside moored boats.
- The risks are small, but tell your doctor if you become ill within two weeks of getting canal, river or reservoir water into your mouth or an open wound as Weils Disease (Leptospirosis) can be contracted from open water.
- Be prepared for changes in weather and local water conditions.
- Swimming is prohibited in Canal & River Trust canals and rivers.

Take safety advice. Watch out for warning signs.



## BE SAFE – Stay Away From the Edge

Learn what to do in an emergency. If someone falls in and needs help:

- Do not dive into the water.
- Keep calm – think before you act.
- Don't put yourself in danger.
- Raise the alarm.
  - Get help on the towpath.
  - Phone the emergency services and follow the advice they give. (If you're not sure where you are, download and use the what3words app to find and tell the emergency services your locations).
- Look around for a life belt or throw line.
- Talk to the person or animal in the water.
  - Urge them to swim towards the bank.



# Boats with Engines

## Your boat needs a licence, Boat Safety Certificate and insurance

### Look after your waterways

- Avoid creating a breaking wash. This can cause damage to the waterway, and will disturb fish and wildlife.
- Don't run your propeller whilst moored; it can be dangerous if someone falls overboard.
- Help keep the water clean and free from oil, diesel, petrol, detergents and other harmful substances. Use environmentally friendly products if possible.
- Never dump rubbish, sewage or oily bilge water into the water or onto the bank.

### Consider others

- Take care to position mooring pins, ropes and cables so they are not a danger to towpath users – if possible make them conspicuous with a

marker, a cover or by painting the top a bright colour. Make sure not to leave mooring pins behind.

- Don't obstruct locks, bridges, water points, access at canoe portage landings or turning (winding) points. If two boats meet at bridges room is needed for one to pull in so they can pass.
- Only double moor or moor wide beam boats in places where navigation will not be obstructed. Only moor against another boat when you have permission from the other boater to do so.
- Boat crews need access to the bank within 25 metres of locks or moveable bridges so do not moor there unless you're using the bridge or lock. In some locations and at busy times more space on lock landings and by moveable bridges will need to be kept clear of moored boats.
- When passing anglers, keep to the centre of the channel, reduce your wash but maintain a steady reduced

pace. Note that on sharp bends the channel may be closer to the outside of the bend.

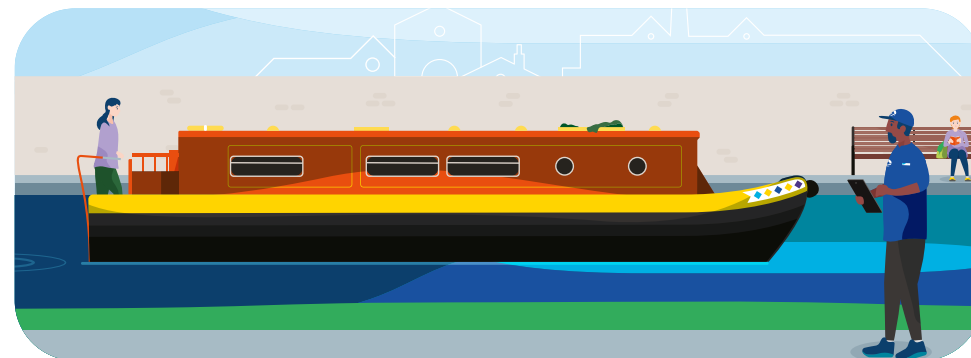
- Slow your speed before passing moored boats, unpowered boats and anglers.
- Please do not moor where signage advises that mooring is temporarily suspended. Please note the local signs concerning waterway events and fishing matches. Sign up on the Canal & River Trust website to receive notices for stoppages and events.

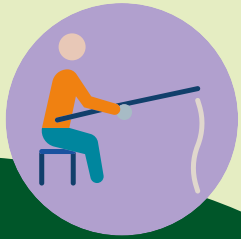
need both a fishing permit and a rod licence from either the Environment Agency or Natural Resources Wales.

- Many waterways are popular with paddlers (including canoeists, kayakers and stand up paddle boards (SUPs) users) and rowing clubs operate on some of the Canal & River Trust rivers and wider canals. Please look out for and be aware of other waterway users.

## Take care

- When mooring on the towpath outside designated mooring sites, try to leave at least a 5 metre gap between the adjacent craft to allow for access for fishing and canoes/kayaks.
- On towpaths, do not moor up in front of anglers.
- Be considerate when running engines and generators for battery charging. The noise can be intrusive for other people. This should be limited to times between 8.00 am and 8.00 pm.
- Please remember that if you want to fish from your boat you will still
- You and your crew must understand how to operate your boat and navigate locks, bridges and tunnels. Read the Boater's Handbook ([canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaters-handbook](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaters-handbook)) before setting off.
- Watch your footing to avoid falls.
- Pay attention to avoid collisions.
- Don't use your body to try and stop the boat; you could get crushed.
- Take things easy, don't strain.
- Understand the risks of fire and explosions on boats.





# Anglers

Fishing rights on most stretches are rented to angling clubs and many sell day tickets. You will need a rod licence from either the Environment Agency or Natural Resources Wales and either one of our Waterway Wanderers permits if the stretch of water you want to fish is controlled by the Canal & River Trust, or you'll need a permit from the local angling club if they control the fishing rights. See [canalrivertrust.org.uk/fishing](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/fishing) for details.

Clubs are required to notify the Trust of all their angling competitions on Canal & River Trust waters.

Native fish species must be returned to the waterways but some non-native species

e.g. sterlet, wels catfish and zander cannot legally be returned. Non-native species must not be moved to another waterway.

## Look after your waterways

- Do not discard hooks and lines, bottles, unwanted bait, groundbait and tin; these can kill or injure wildlife. Gather them up and take them away with you.

## Consider others

- Where practicable, make sure the towpath is easily passable by keeping your fishing tackle tidy. Please keep the towpath as clear as possible so that other towpath users can pass. Please consider those with limited mobility such as wheelchair users or people with buggies.
- Don't obstruct locks, bridges, water points, access at canoe portage landings or turning (winding) points. If two boats meet at fixed bridges room

is needed for one to pull in so they can pass.

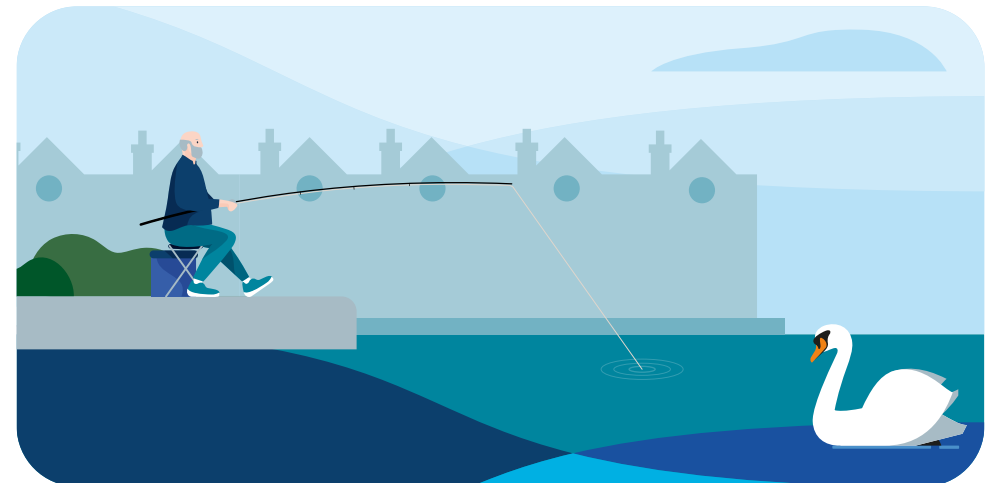
- Boat crews need access to the bank within 25 metres of locks or moveable bridges so do not fish there. In some locations and at busy times more space on lock landings and by moveable bridges will be required.
- Angling is permitted at short-stay moorings, but at busy times when space is limited, boats wishing to moor have priority and you may be asked to move. Please do so.
- Boaters wishing to use turning bays (winding points) and marina entrances have priority and anglers choosing to fish there may need to temporarily move.
- Do not cast floats, ledgers or lures on to boats.
- Consider using a pole cup if you need to feed close to boats: don't throw or catapult groundbait onto the decks or against the hulls of boats or tap

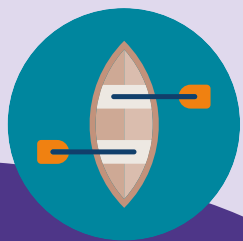
them with a pole tip – chipped paint is expensive to repair, and hooks in ropes can be very dangerous.

- Boats are people's homes so please be courteous and respect their privacy, including those on the opposite bank.
- When passing anglers, boats are asked to keep to the centre of the channel but note that on sharp bends the channel may be closer to outside of the bend. Some boats will not be able to avoid you if you fish on the outside of bends.
- When organising large events, do leave a section of towpath that can be used for moorings.

## Take care

- Don't fish within 30 metres of overhead power lines. Look out and look up – electricity kills!
- Do not use a towpath when signed as closed.





# Paddlers & Rowers – Unpowered Craft

**Any canoes, kayaks, stand up paddle boards (SUP), rowing or other unpowered craft require a licence to be on our waterways. If you belong to British Canoeing or Canoe Wales, your membership includes the necessary licence. Otherwise contact us for details on how to licence your craft [canalrivertrust.org.uk/licence](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/licence)**

## Consider others

- When passing anglers, keep to the centre of the channel, in single file and go slowly.
- Don't 'seal' launch or drag boats, as this will wear away natural banks and damage vegetation. Remember, you're sharing the space with wildlife too. Float your craft, whether that's your canoe, kayak or SUP for launching or landing.

- Don't hold events without permission (including time trials). Contact us if you want to plan an event on our waterways. See [canalrivertrust.org.uk/planning-an-event](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/planning-an-event) for details.
- Always check, clean, dry to stop the spread of invasive nonnative species. Check your boat and clothing for fragments of plants or other creatures. Clean your boat and clothing, ideally by the water where you've just got out. Dry your boat and clothing before using it elsewhere. Invasive nonnative species can damage waterways, spoiling the wildlife but also your enjoyment in the future. For this reason, it's really important to check, clean, dry.
- Be considerate if you use an electric charger for you inflatable canoe, kayak or SUP. The noise can be intrusive for other people, especially those who live on or by the water. This should be limited to times between 8.00 am and 8.00 pm.

## Take care

- Make sure your craft – canoe, kayak or SUP, is suitable for the waterway you are using it on and that you are competent and confident using it.
- Larger craft, like canal boats you might meet when paddling, need deeper water and room to manoeuvre. Move to the side of the channel where the person navigating the boat can see you.
- Unpowered craft are not permitted through many tunnels or on parts of the larger river navigations. See [canalrivertrust.org.uk/canoeing-and-kayaking](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/canoeing-and-kayaking) to check our safety regulations.
- If you are permitted to use a tunnel, display a forward-facing bright light and carry a whistle to warn other craft of your presence.
- Where possible travel through in groups.
- Be prepared for changes in weather and local water conditions. Use your dry bag to pack a change of clothes and layers, just in case.
- Not all towpaths have smooth surfaces. If you're going to be portaging, make sure you've got footwear for getting on and off the water.
- Avoid using locks. It is usually much quicker, efficient and safer to portage. In exceptional circumstances Canoes may need to use a lock. Don't stay aboard your craft in a filling or emptying lock. SUPs may not use a lock.
- Rowing Clubs operate by agreement on some of the Canal & River Trust rivers and wider canals. Advice to help rowing crews navigate safely can be found at [www.britishrowing.org/tideway-navigation](https://www.britishrowing.org/tideway-navigation)



# Canal & River Trust

At Canal & River Trust, we believe our waterways have the power to make a real difference to people's lives and that spending time by water makes us healthier and happier. We are the charity that cares for and brings to life 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England & Wales. Our waterways transform places and we bring communities together to create spaces that we can all enjoy.

## Contact us

 @CRTcontactus

**Enjoy. Volunteer. Donate**

[canalrivertrust.org.uk](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk)

[canalrivertrust.org.uk/contact-us](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/contact-us)

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