

# PRESS RELEASE

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## BODY WORN CAMERAS ON TOWPATHS

The Canal & River Trust is to commence the use of body worn cameras for its customer service employees whose role includes day-to-day interaction with those on the towpath. The cameras will initially be used daily by its boat licence customer support team in the Trust's London & South East region in response to increased concerns about the potential for confrontation, abuse or harm whilst conducting their work.

Body worn cameras have been used in specific instances by the Trust's boat licence customer support teams across the network since 2019. The development will now see cameras issued as standard for day-to-day duties, including interacting with towpath visitors, assisting boaters, and when issuing notices or other written communications.

Body worn cameras have become increasingly familiar in other areas of society, for example on trains, hospitals and retail settings. Many frontline emergency services deploy them across their workforce in response to an increase in threatening and abusive behavior.

Many Trust colleagues frequently work alone on the towpath so, alongside other procedures, the body worn cameras will be a tool to support them while they go about their daily jobs. The use of body worn cameras will provide legally admissible evidence if the Trust needs to act against those who abuse or threaten colleagues or customers.

Whilst instances of poor behaviour are rare, like other areas of society it is on the increase and the Trust will not tolerate assaults on employees, volunteers or contractors and other customers. Offenders will be dealt with robustly and the Trust will seek to bring criminal proceedings against those responsible where necessary.

The use of body worn cameras will get underway later in September with a potential roll-out elsewhere on the network in due course.

**ENDS**

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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 e, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1BB

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**Notes to editors**

The Canal & River Trust cares for and brings to life 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across Wales and England. We believe waterways have the power to make a difference to people's lives and that spending time by water can make us all healthier and happier. By bringing communities together to make a difference to their local waterway, we are creating places and spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, every day.