

***Audit of "Community Boating" activity
North East and adjoining waterways.
(Powered craft only)***



Completed on behalf of the Canal and River Trust North East Partnership

Community boating activity is considered for the purpose of this audit as enabling access for the benefit of of disadvantaged and excluded groups in ways that promote social cohesion ,conservation and environment promotion/enhancement, or supporting economic regeneration.

Preface

The audit was designed to identify current activity in order that consideration could be given to

- defining community boating
- Identifying the gaps in provision
- Exploring the social benefits of this activity to both supporting the delivery of CRT 's Vision and the wider social agenda.

The demographics of community boating have been drawn from a National survey carried out on behalf of IWAC IN 2008 and these have been used to approximate the benefit to North East.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Compare the audit against current CRT discounted licence holders
- Explore current relationship between CRT and projects, including use of CRT assets
- Consider potential for collaboration
- Seek means to consider further qualitative research. (Application for undergraduate research project made - jan 2015)

The activity has been broken down into the 7 Waterways "character" regions identified by the Partnership Board and incorporated into a grid. The grid has been extended to include heritage and environment assets of the region in order to support discussion.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Using the last available electronic figures (2008) from the National Community Boats Association it is possible to gain an impression of the contribution available through community boats. The National stats only relate to NCBA members who responded to the request to provide the stats. (The information is gathered at the time of membership renewal but there is no requirement to provide the information)

Location of NCBA projects	Number
East Midlands	6
East of England	1
London	8
North East	1
North West	10
Scotland	3
South East	15
South West	3
Wales	1
West Midlands	12
Yorkshire	12

The North East figures are gained through the breakdown of the geographic spread of NCBA members supported by the audit of current activity within the partnership area. This indicates that the N.E area accounts for 20% of membership and using this figure provides an approximation total of user profile, income etc for the area

	National (York and NE) 2008 figures	North East Partnership Current activity (approx)
Members	72 (13)	11
Non members	Not known	3
Boats	120 (20)	24
Passenger capacity (daily)	1476	300
Days available for use	14,205	2841
<p>Significant User profile (5% or more of total user numbers)</p> <p>The total number of users on NCBA boats (2008) was 149,953 with individuals spending an average of 5days with an organization giving a total of 749,765 passenger days for significant users</p>		
<p>Projects working with: -</p>		

Wheel chair (day trip)	41	8
Wheel chair (residential)	21	4
Young people		
1-10 yrs	25	5
10-25 yrs	56	11
Offenders \ex offenders	24	4
Drug alcohol problems	23	4
Family	50	10
Schools & Children's services	53	10
Older people	52	10
Physical disability	55	11
Learn disability	62	12
Mental health problems	50	10
Refugees	22	4
Minority ethnic	35	7
Carers	44	9
Homeless	22	4
Staff		
Volunteers	2495	499
Paid	240	48

The 72 members had the following proportions of							
% Of users of white ethnicity	0-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100
Total projects	3	2	5	5	3	15	11
The proportion of Asian Users of the 72 members was							
5% of users of Asian ethnicity	0-9	10-19	20-34	35+	The geographic spread of these projects is not available		
Total projects	20	9	5	2			

The user profile indicates that 36% of projects had a white user profile made up of over 80% where as only 2 projects had an Asian representation above 35%

The income breakdown of projects is						
Income per project	-£0-5k	£5-10k	£10-30k	£30-50k	£50-100k	+£100k
Total projects	7	9	19	13	9	8
Number of organizations receiving income from						
Donations	46					
Grants	45					
Legacies	7					
Sponsorship	12					
Local Authorities	26					
Trading	31					
Service level Agreements	11					

Without the raw data it is not possible to manipulate the information to identify specific trends or connections.

Interesting observations can be made

income.

66% of projects earn income under £50,000 per annum, the majority being from donation or grants with only 11% earning above £100k p.a.

Local Authority income accounts within 36% of projects and this must be under threat with the current austerity measures.

Staff profile

over 90% of staff is made up of volunteers.

This data only indicates the quantitative value of boat provision but can be used to inform fuller research

This could include

interrogation of CRT data to establish current connections (e.g. licensing, moorings, property occupation, joint working)
directed interviews/case studies.

Prior to the expending of time, effort and money consideration should be given as to the use of this information when collected.

GEOGRAPHIC PROFILE

"KEEPING PEOPLE CONNECTED WITH HISTORY AND NATURE" - BUT WHAT ABOUT THE DIS-CONNECTED?

“It is not the primary role of a Navigation Authority to combat social exclusion but it helps to understand how inland waterways can contribute to social cohesion” **(IWAC Social Exclusion Report 2009 -Using inland waterways to combat the effects of social exclusion Appendix 1)**

“Community boats will always use the waterways infrastructure more than privately owned pleasure boats and often more than commercial hire boat operators as well but they also bring significantly larger numbers of people into contact with the waterways. Community boat organisations make a wide -ranging contribution to an agenda that includes many of the nations (and CRT’s) social and community cohesion priorities or aims.” **(National Community Boat Association response to CRT licence consultation July 2013 – app.2)**

The table below indicates the current (known) activity within the North East Partnership and adjacent areas. The focus is on boat provision, community and commercial but has been extended to include activity of the Natural and Built Environment together with links to creativity and arts

		Community boats	Restoration	Heritage	Environment	Creativity/ arts	Current project	Commercial operators
1	Tees	Puppet boat				Festival		
2	York					Art boat		
2	Ripon							
2	Selby	Beverley Barge Co						
3	Pocklington		Pocklington CS		SSSI			
4	Castleford	<i>Pugwash</i>		Heritage centre	Fairburn ings	Henry Moore		
4	Knottingley	<i>Pugwash</i>		Heritage centre (proposed)				
4	Goole	Sobriety Humber Keel		Yorkshire Waterways museum				
5	South Yorkshire	Swinton locks Adams Ark (operates from Skipton) Ethel Trust	Chesterfield Canal Barnsley canal		River Stewardship Co	Festival		

6	Leeds	Canal Connections Sea Cadets <i>All hands on Deck</i>		Leeds Waterfront Heritage trail Kirkstall abbey Armley mills Thwart mills Royal Armouries Discovery centre Artemis Middleton railway	SSSI Rodley nature reserve TCV Hollybush Kirkstall nature reserve Rothwell country park YWT sites	Waterfront festival Leeds arts events Hydro citizenship		Kirkstall flyboat Lady Teal
6	Wakefield	<i>Pugwash</i> Jubilee boat	CRT locks	Stanley Ferry viaduct		Hepworth gallery		
6	Kirklees	Safe Anchor	Aire and Calder CS Tunnel End		Mirfield Promenade	Dewsbury waterfront		
6	Calderdale	Guides boat			Calder futures	Sowerby bridge canal festival		Shire cruisers
	Skipton	SCAD Achieving Together Adams Ark (see column 5)	Leeds - Liverpool CS	Skipton castle	Yorks dales	Canal festival		Pennines Cruisers Snaygill Silsden Aire Valley cruisers

	Bingley	Out and About		5 Rise	YWT Aire projects			
	Shipley	J.A.M.E.S. Angus Ferguson		UNESCO Saltaire Shipley Glen tramway	Denso Marston	Saltaire festival WH Day Arts festival Hockney - Salts Mills	Dobson Locks welcome centre	Titus trip boat Ice cream boat
	Bradford		Bfd. Canal	Little Germany Industrial Museum UNESCO City of Film KWVRailway Cliffe Castle Bronte		Hydro Citizenship		

The table indicates the current known provision but does not include non-powered craft.
geographic areas that are under represented can be identified.

Projects in italics do not have a boat but use community boats to deliver their work (e.g Safe Anchor Trust).

It can be seen that a high incidence of boats operate on Leeds-Liverpool canal (although the 3 Bradford projects are under threat of cuts/closure).

Background to the audit

The National Community Boats Association is a Regd Charity which has been in existence for over 30 years. It was originally conceived to facilitate the informal exchange of information between community boat organisations and has evolved over the years. It is (currently) a completely volunteer organisation.

The NCBA's vision is a network of well resourced, well managed community boating organisations that promote access to UK waterways as well as promoting the safe use of community boats as a resource available for the benefit of disadvantaged and excluded groups in ways that promote social cohesion, protect the environment and support economic regeneration.

The NCBA was engaged during the British Waterways licence consultation to explore the licensing of community boats. During that process it was apparent that there was a lack of informed knowledge regarding the use, and value of such project boats. The BW organisational response was inconsistent and there was little if any monitoring of the procedures or activities of licence holders. The inconsistency was not restricted to licences but also extended to the use of operational and non-operational assets/leases etc. The NCBA responded to a request to submit a proposal regarding discounted licences, which incorporated issues relating to safeguarding, monitoring and use.

The transition into Canal and River Trust superseded that process but this audit provides an opportunity to explore these statements.

IT IS FELT OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE THAT TO EXPERIENCE THE TRUE UNIQUENESS OF A NAVIGABLE WATERWAY A BOAT IS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT. THIS IS OFTEN BEYOND THE MEANS OF OUR MORE CHALLENGED COMMUNITIES ALBEIT THEY ARE ADJACENT TO THESE WATERWAYS. THEREFORE TO MAKE OUR WATERWAYS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL WE HAVE TO CONSIDER WAYS OF OVERCOMING THIS SOCIAL EXCLUSION.

The shortfall of the current audit is acknowledged. It provides a quantitative survey with feedback being restricted to local contacts. It does however provide a vehicle to explore potential collaboration, to give a demographic profile of current users and the use of volunteers . It further provides an opportunity to consider how these and CRT assets could be used to (re)- connect our communities to “history and nature”

Although CBO's (Community boat organisations) are some of the safest users of the waterways, this is only as a result of rigorous training and safety regime- largely introduced by the NCBA- to comply with MCA and good practise standards. This was an opportunity to at least endorse proper oversight if not add to its rigour that has been missed. Using its own systems and processes to at least show support for this system would have helped mitigate CRT's own position in the event of a major accident.

(National Community Boat Association response to CRT licence consultation July 2013 – app.2)

REFERENCES

2 reports are available for reference

- Use of the Waterways to Combat social exclusion (Inland Waterways Advisory Council, 2009)
- NCBA response to CRT licence consultation July 2013

