



Overstaying blitz

But is it overkill outside London where scrapping 48hr in winter means more

IT has been a complaint of boaters for many years that the Canal & River Trust, and British Waterways before it, didn't do enough to deal with persistent over-stayers, those boats which seem to haunt the same short stretch of visitor moorings for months, sometimes years.

In recent weeks there has been a flurry of action, apparently aimed at rectifying that issue – at least as far as continuously cruising boats are concerned. But is it a solution for London that needs to be looked at again on other parts of the system?

Put simply, C&RT has adopted a policy of monitoring continuous cruisers more closely and sending regular reminders to those they don't think are moving far enough. Those boaters who 'consistently failed to move in accordance with the Trust's Guidance, won't get another licence unless they find a home mooring.

That will then give CRT the power to remove the subsequently unlicensed boat completely, even if it is someone's home. The heart of the problem is how far is far enough and the Trust like BW before it has clearly spent many hours trying to come up with a definition that doesn't contravene the 1995 legislation, which contains no requirement to travel a minimum distance or to follow any specific cruising pattern beyond the 14-day stay limit. In a recent Question and Answer session C&RT admitted setting a specific distance was beyond its legal powers.

Instead it has come up with guidance that the necessary movement is from one 'neighbourhood' to another, that continuously cruising boats have to go from neighbourhood A to B to C and not back to A unless they are reversing the direction of travel on a genuine cruise or reach the end of a waterway.

So, what is a 'neighbourhood'? CRT says it 'will vary from area to area – on a rural waterway a village or hamlet may be a neighbourhood and on an urban water-



Empty moorings in Gas St Birmingham - the heart of the canal system - clearly overcrowding is not a national issue

way a suburb or district within a town or city may be a neighbourhood.'

It says it is not possible (nor appropriate) to specify distances that need to be travelled. What has changed, apart from some revisions to the Terms and Conditions of the licence to enhance C&RT's powers, is that the Trust will be monitoring CCers more closely, using the GRP systems of its data gatherers and deciding whether they meet

its interpretation of the 1995 Act.

If they don't retribution is threatened to be swift and devastating for boaters whose boat is their home.

Richard Parry, chief executive of the Canal & River Trust, said: "The right for boaters to continuously cruise is enshrined in law, and I welcome this way of boating. Our new approach does not change any rules, but it does seek to provide greater encouragement to everyone to comply with our Guidance, and spells out the consequences if they consistently don't.

"In many cases, making some small adjustments to a cruising pattern is enough to meet our Guidance, while in other cases taking up a home mooring may be more appropriate. Ultimately we are trying to help boaters understand our requirements and avoid running into trouble, for the benefit of all boaters."

Whilst some boater organisations have given the new policy a cautious welcome an online petition calling for the Trust to be prevented from evicting liveaboard boaters from their homes has gathered 10,000 signatures and the very active National Barge Travellers Association (NBTA) opposes the new policy and promised to take 'whatever steps are necessary to defend targettravellers against this new attack on the right to use and live on a boat without a home mooring'.

It claims "CRT is effectively proposing to evict thousands of live-aboard boaters without home moorings from its waterways. "If boats are overstaying, CRT already has sufficient enforcement powers," says NBTA. "It is not within CRT's legal powers to enforce its draconian new policy. It sets requirements that go beyond the British Waterways Act 1995.

"The 2013 judgement in the case of CRT v Mayers confirms that it would be unlawful for CRT to set a minimum distance that continuous cruisers must travel to comply with the law."

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Bargains

DIESEL

- Our fuel is the cheapest at a commercial boatyard on the waterways - and FAME free. It can change on a weekly basis but it is now at:

69.9p

BATTERIES

- 110amphr batteries JUST

£64.95

each when you buy four or more in the same transaction. £69.00 each if sold singly.

ECOFANS

The original and best fan for your stove just

£114.50

Winter boating fun for young

PPOTENTIAL boaters of the future are learning that boating can be year-round fun as, for the third year running a Blackpool youth organisation took three boatloads of youngsters on a seven day adventure from Norbury Wharf.

Boathouse Youth are regular hirers of Norbury's boats and the firm's Managing Director, Simon Jenkins said: It was fantastic to see three boats, including the latest addition to our fleet, Pandora, loaded with kids over the half term period. I do think that these sort of organisations really need supporting as they have the potential to create future boaters of the canals." Boathouse Youth says its aim is to help every child



Locking up and young person reach their individual potentials by removing barriers and restrictions to new challenges and experiences. The February half-term adventure



Alfresco music on the cabin roof -in February!

involved the club's Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award group who took the three boats north on Shropshire Union Canal and up the Llangollen as far as Ellesmere as a team-building activity. The organisers and the youngsters insist it was 'great fun' despite the February weather.



Putting latest addition Pandora through her paces

'... vast majority travel long distances'

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It certainly seems that C&RT has arrived at its own definition of how far is far enough but has done so without making Continuously Cruising boaters aware of what that figure is. That is something that will delight some boating organisations, especially those concerned with apparent overcrowding in London and the Western End of the Kennet and Avon Canal. But what will this new enthusiasm for moving boaters on have on the more tranquil and less crowded parts of the system, such as the Shropshire Union? Simon Jenkins, Managing Director of Norbury Wharf, based at the heart of that canal, said: "We all know boats that seem to never move, although I am far from convinced they are all Continuous Cruisers. "We look after a lot of boats without a home mooring at Norbury and the vast majority travel long distances, especially in the summer months. "I can see that something probably needs to be done in London and around Bath where overcrowding seems to be a problem and dealing with persistent offenders is desirable, although

making more moorings available and building more facilities would also make compliant cruising easier. "However, on the Shroppie and most other rural canals, there really isn't much of a problem and I feel C&RT need to take a more regional approach, combined with a longer-term view of a boater's cruising pattern. If someone travels hundreds of miles a year then it would be petty to insist they move from a 'neighbourhood' in 14 days if they are complying with any local mooring time limits. "In fact the most positive thing the Trust has done is to recognise that short-term moorings are unnecessary in winter and decreed 48-hour and other shorter limits will revert to 14-days between the start of November and the end of March. "This will benefit local canalside businesses like ourselves, the shops and the pubs as Continuous Cruisers are almost the only traffic using our services in those months. It would be contradictory to harass those boaters who genuinely travel much of the year but want slow down in winter so they can enjoy a leisurely saunter along the Shroppie."

Roses and Castles rule

Canalware is a tradition that attracts boaters and visitors alike

There is something about the hand-painted decoration of ordinary objects in the historic style of the canals that attracts many people

Often called 'roses and castles' the designs feature other flowers, cottages, churches, rivers and lakes - anything that could be part of a romantic landscape. In the past the designs covered virtually everything in or on the narrowboat - including the vessel itself. The drinking can, the horse's harness, doors, fitted furniture, lamps, anything and everything was decorated with bright and cheerful chocolate-box designs.

It is not known exactly where the Roses & Castles movement originated. There are obvious links with Romany culture and their elaborately painted caravans, but historians have also identified similarities with folk art from Germany, Holland and even Asia.

The reason for its popularity and growth with working boat families is tied to the limited size of the boat cabin, the pride of the boat people and the competition between the canals and the railways.



The wives and other women folk of the boatmen were determined to make every item bright and attractive.

With brightly painted romantic landscapes adorning every available surface, crocheted lace hanging in the cabin and everything scrubbed and polished, the boat men and women displayed their pride in their trade and created solidarity with their fellow boaters. These days the craft is undergoing something of a renaissance and

Norbury's excellent Canalware is painted by Tim Yorke who started painting roses and castles after buying his first narrowboat from us in 2006.

He went on a course with Dave Moore to learn the art.



A hole in the canals' heart

GAS Street in Birmingham is usually seen as the heart of the canal system - so a serious leak in the canal there, pouring into a disused railway tunnel, is causing some problems. When the leak was first spotted during a routine inspection of the tunnel there were fears that a catastrophic collapse would send water from the 50-mile pound cascading towards New St Station.

However the affected section has now been drained and the Canal & River Trust is working with contractors to decide what the problem is, how best to fix it and how

long that will take. Current betting is several weeks.



Contractors chatting above the pumped out section

A place in the country with everything

MOOR at Norbury and your boat will be at the heart of one of the prettiest and most popular canals in the country. Go North and you are in the rolling countryside of Staffordshire and Shropshire with small market towns and pretty villages. There are some of those on the

way south, too, but you also have the fascination of Britain's second city, the vibrant and ever-changing Birmingham. Add in the fact that you have a proper working boatyard and their highly skilled staff immediately to hand, for all your repairs, fuel and other essentials, and it is easy to see why

Norbury doesn't often have vacancies. The start of the year means there are a couple of moorers heading for pastures new so if it sounds like your sort of mooring, online and in a short arm, call the office to check on the details.

Get afloat and try the fun of boating
Take a trip on Victory, Defiant, Bounty - our day boats for 10 people.
You can enjoy up to 17 miles of the beautiful Shropshire Union canal with no locks and 6 pubs!



Or stay ashore in our cosy cottage home from home



Boats for sale

Boats hardly arrive with us for sale before they have gone again, we are literally selling them faster than we can re-stock.

If you want a quick sale for your vessel why not get in touch with us at Norbury Wharf?

Our brokerage rates and service are difficult to beat - we charge just 5% + VAT of the sale price to sell your boat with a minimum charge of £1,250.00 + VAT.

We offer a six month rolling contract, when your boat will be advertised in most major waterway publications and on the internet. We will also advertise your boat at our busy location where we have an extremely high through-put of potential buyers.

Moorings are free whilst your boat is for sale. Our combined knowledge of living on boats and the sale of them is extensive and our friendly team are always here to help make the process very easy for both buyers and sellers alike. All monies are handled securely through our escrow accounts.

Interested? Then contact Simon or David now on 01785 284292 alternatively email us on: info@norburywharfltd.co.uk



REF: 10340
Ichthus - 57ft semi trad stern built by Cheshire boat company, powered by a Vetus diesel, professionally repainted in 2007, docked in 2012 for blacking. **£26,999**



REF: 10339
Maid of Avoca - 23ft all steel cruiser built by Springer engineering, powered by an inboard twin cylinder diesel engine, does require some work internally. **£6,500**



REF: 10346
Duchess
A 47ft all steel cruiser stern narrowboat built by Wessex Narrowboats in 2000. She is powered by a three cylinder Barrus engine with PRIM150 hydraulically operated gearbox which was fitted new in 2008. From entering the cabin at the stern is the fixed double bed with wardrobes at the foot of the bed. Next comes the shower room with full sized shower, pump out toilet and vanity basin. Following this is the galley which is fitted with a four ring gas burner, grill/oven, stainless steel sink and drainer and 12v fridge. At the front of the cabin is the saloon with a fixed seat on each side which can be used as two single beds or converted to one large double. Heating is provided by a Webastodiesel heater which feeds the radiators throughout the cabin. This boat has been well maintained and is ready to cruise.

£29,950

Cloud Nine
As the name of the boat suggests, the new owners will be on 'Cloud Nine' when they own this beauty. Cloud Nine is a 62 foot long traditional stern narrow boat built by Alexander narrow boats and fitted out by Sandhills Narrowboats - a little known fit out company of exceptional standards. Although the boat is a trad it has a very large rear slide which once open reveals a large deck area where there is ample room for a couple of people to stand/sit with ease. Under the wooden decked area is a Beta 43HP cocooned engine, this engine is super silent and also has the benefit of a 240V generator (Travel Power) coupled to the engine, as well as the usual alternators for the 12 volt system. The boat has an impressive electrical inventory, including inverter, land line, 12v/240v battery charger and galvanic isolator. The boat has been seriously designed for either long term cruising, living aboard or indeed cruising with guests.

£54,950



TUG
- 20ft 'Bantam style' pusher tug. Powered by a three cylinder air cooled Deutz engine. Hydraulic drive - motor recently serviced. Two winches and ropes to the front which are in excellent condition. Docked and blacked.

£9,999.



Crew:
36ft unpowered welfare/work boat. Cabin at rear with bench seating, worktop with sink and space for a multifuel stove. Toilet compartment and tool store. Large open hold. The hull of this boat has been over-plated.

£4,999



William
A 56 foot cruiser built by Hancock and Lane. The rear cabin has a double bed, wardrobe space, and plenty of storage under the bed. The shower compartment has a pump out toilet, shower and handbasin. The galley has the usual appliances and a large 12 volt fridge and freezer. The large open plan saloon, has front doors leading out onto the front deck and the boat is heated via a solid fuel stove with back boiler as well as a Alde gas boiler. There is a 240 volt external hook up, an inverter, and battery charger. The boat is powered by an excellent running 3 cylinder Lister air cooled marine diesel engine which was removed in 2010 and rebuilt, last serviced in August 2014, the boat comes with documented service history since 2007. Last hull survey 2007.



REF: 10337
£25,500.00