

Dear Ian,

I am writing to try and have my views heard about the recent moorings running alongside Meanwhile gardens, W11 and the misery that they have brought to local residents.

I live on Hornead Road, W9 (Westminster) and all the gardens on my side of the street back directly on to the canal. There is a towpath on the other side (Kensington & Chelsea) of the canal which is used by walkers, cyclists, occasional fisherman etc. Until last summer boats never moored opposite the back of our houses; the boats were to be found much nearer to Little Venice, where there are signs allowing moorings, and facilities for the boat-dwellers. Also boats were moored further along the canal from us, from the Sainsbury's at Ladbroke grove going along the water running opposite Kensal Green cemetery. Clearly it was understood that moorings were not allowed along this stretch as there is no signage and no facilities at all. My immediate neighbours at no. \*\* Hornead Road have lived here for 28 years and have never known boats to have moored alongside us until last summer.

A few boats started mooring along the Hornead stretch during the Olympics, but we assumed that was just a temporary thing. Now we are stuck in the horrible position of having boats moored opposite our houses all the time. The boat-dwellers look straight into our small gardens and into our houses. We have had thefts from our back gardens, which were virtually unheard of before. The noise from engines, generators and people is very loud. The environmental pollution is appalling - endless rubbish is tipped straight from the boats into the canal, including human waste (once directly from the source). Coal burned on the boats is pumping out black smoke. And to top it all, the Canal and Rivers Trust do NOTHING to enforce their own rules about nuisance, continuous cruising etc. They seem to be utterly impotent. In all my dealings with the CRT the only thing they have done efficiently is NOT to tell me about this consultation, hence this 11th hour email.

Planning permission would never have been granted for a building to be erected at the end of our back gardens looking straight into our properties so why are these boats are being allowed to stay here causing the same monumental invasion of privacy? On occasions when we have tried to speak to some of the boat-dwellers we have been met with hostile and aggressive language, and yet these same people force themselves upon us as our new neighbours.

Please let my views be heard. I have no idea who else to turn to.

Regards

Amanda E

Dear Mr. Williamson,

I live on the Paddington Branch of the Grand Union Canal at Meanwhile Gardens.

Mooring has not been allowed here for over 38 years because of navigational reasons, a bend in the canal.

The sign forbidding mooring was taken down for the Olympics and not replaced.

Since then we have had a growing number of boats moored in our stretch of the canal.

Our houses are right on the canal. There is no pavement or road separating us, so the boats are very close to us and boaters can look right into our houses. Our privacy really has gone.

Most of the boats stay for months. Many move away for a week and then return.

They run their generators to generate energy, as there are no facilities here, and this sound reverberates on the buildings opposite and makes a persistent noise that is impossible to ignore. A few boats have done this around [4am](#), and were abusive when neighbours asked them the next morning to do it at more social hours.

Come the autumn, they burn coal and wood. Our houses are full of acrid smoke smells, and we can't open the windows on warmer nights.

There have been defecations in the canal and all their rubbish is dumped in the bins of Meanwhile gardens.

Whenever we have complained to the Canal Trust about noise/fumes/ pollution they tell us to contact the environmental agency who were as helpful as they could be but also said that this is a Canal issue and we should be complaining to Canal and Rivers Trust.

Which we have done many times but have been met with silence or advice like 'get curtains ' 'call environmental agency [at 4am](#)' or outright rudeness.

The Kensal stretch of the Canal has had its beauty ruined by fly tipping and a huge stretch of boats that do not fit the character of the Canal. These boats have been there for many months and are taking over the area to the detriment of other users.

I love the Canal, but I see it being ruined for the many, by the few who are not following the Canal and a river Trust regulations, which the Trust are not enforcing.

Regards,

Ann Cahill

Hi Ian,

Following rumblings in the Towpath magazine regarding moorings in London from permanent to visitor, I had a look at your founding document. I was amused with the comment that an inspection may even include a ride on a narrowboat.

Now please, if the committee has any idea that they will glean useful information from such a trip, then I shudder to think what value the final report will have on any realistic solutions to the mooring problem, if there is one.

I would suggest that any member of investigation team should have at least a year's living on either a permanently moored live-aboard or a permanent cruiser.

There is presently an upgrade on the canal from Little Venice towards Ladbroke Grove. I was sent a questionnaire on this work which accompanied a description of what was proposed.

What was blatantly omitted, and I suspect will also be ignored in your investigation will be the dire state of the canal itself from the viewpoint that it is intended for boats and that its access to the general public is desirable but secondary. If the canals were maintained to the point that moorings were accessible along their length the mooring problem would be greatly diminished. The truth is that they are not and considerable lengths of canalside cannot be accessed safely. I am not going to go into details; after all this is an Email and not a tome (yet).

The photo attached will illustrate one of the mooring challenges. All the metal-work shown was pulled out by my wife and I and we are both on the wrong side of 70, and all was within the mooring ropes of our boat. We could have lifted out an entire metal goalpost as well if we had the strength. Now this stuff does bad things to the boat's propeller and you may wish to shed a tear for the £800 it will cost me to lift my boat out of the water and replace mine, all due to negligence on the part of the canal authorities.

If I can make one appeal, it is that any action taken as a result of your committee be the result of a holistic investigation and not from the bias of a misinformed point of view.

Regards

Brian

Dear Mr. Williamson - I wish briefly, I hope, to contribute the following to the GLA'S consultation about canal boats and moorings in this locality. I have only just heard about this investigation. I live at no. \*\* Hornead Rd W9 \*\*\*, overlooking the Grand Union Canal at what is locally called Meanwhile Gardens W9. In the last 12 months, but rarely before July 2012 up to 10 -15 narrow and other type boats have and are routinely "fly-mooring" along the towpath opposite the rear of my flat where I once was able to look onto an exceptionally rare and unspoilt natural landscape pretty unusual for Central London. Increasing nos. of boats have arrived here and elsewhere principally because of security arrangements which were required for the Olympic Games last year These boat owners presumably possess - "Continuous Mooring Licences" permitting them to moor anywhere they can hammer a spike into the tow-path for up to 14 days. The advent of moored boats here has completely and detrimentally altered the appearance, feel, sound and experience of this local environment. Boats: < generate noise from engine-testing sometimes

late at night or early sat./ sunday mornings and other noise from late-night parties > <pollute the atmosphere with engine effluent> <degrade the canal area with waste and refuse> < essentially "overlook" all the canal-side homes at Hornead Rd. We, here , now have a new, unknown and changing community of neighbours whose life-styles, concerns and interests are not easily or likely to be shared by the more permanent residents of Hornead Rd. And as for the proposed option of "Permanent Mooring Permits" - In this locality it would be, in my strongly considered opinion, ( I have lived here for 35 years) outrageous and completely unacceptable. Of course boats have always ranged the canals - boats and water after all - but why must they moor here when this causes objections and alternative locations less objectionable to residents have been suggested? At present the rules for mooring are not properly enforced - residents have, and continue to record plenty of evidence of transgressions. On a positive note - a reasonable proposal for the Canal and River Trust to create new moorings away from "overlooked" homes here was itself overlooked and not even replied to. So the CRT ignore objections and secure their own interests with scant reference to the impact on homes in Hornead Rd. - and no apparent consultation whatever. Not even the relevant local authority - The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea - will commit to consulting residents about what is now, effectively, a " change of use of the canal / canal tow-path" Where do we go from here??!! Yours sincerely - Clive Barger.

Dear Mr Williamson,

As a resident on Hornead Road backing onto the canal since 1992 I am alarmed at a sudden surge in barges mooring behind us.

Until the Olympic games, no barges were allowed to moor on either side of our stretch of the canal. This seemed to have been lifted on the Meanwhile Gardens side. Residents assumed that the pre-existing policy would be reinstated after the Games. That did not happen and we have had a very chequered experience with barges moored opposite. Some have been disruptive, noisy and abusive. There has been no apparent policing or monitoring of comings and goings.

Worse still, suddenly there are barges on our side of the canal. These have never been allowed in the 21 years that I have lived here. They are simply too close to my window and I am deeply concerned that there has been a shift in usage without consulting affected parties.

These should not be allowed and I urge a swift clampdown on what appears to this long term resident to be unwelcome squatting.

I look forward to your timely response.

Yours sincerely,

David Motion

Dear Mr Williamson

I am writing to contribute my views to the investigation by the London Assembly into mooring issues on London's canals with specific reference to the Lea Navigation between Tottenham Lock and Old Ford Lock.

I am a member of Lea Rowing Club in Clapton, the only rowing club in Hackney and possibly one of the closest sports clubs to the Olympic site. We use the stretch of canal between Tottenham and Old Ford for training, as rowers have done since Victorian times. We have always been a vibrant club with strong junior, adult and veteran sections. We have seen a huge increase in demand for rowing as a result of the 2012 Olympics and the club could be regarded as a legacy success. We share the river with a canoe club, and a Sea Scouts base as well as a narrowboat marina and visiting narrowboaters.

Since 2006 we have noticed a significant increase in the number of visiting narrowboats using the River Lea. Prior to 2006 it was unusual to encounter more than one or two moored boats on the stretch of river between Old Ford Lock and the Lea Bridge Road (a stretch where there are no permanent moorings) however now there are likely to be in excess of thirty boats moored at any one time. Most of these are of the continuous cruising variety and are very familiar to us as the same boats either stay on the same stretch or revisit on a very regular basis.

The problems we encounter are:-

Boats double, triple or even quadruple moored causing a bottle neck which is difficult or even dangerous to negotiate.

Boats moored in awkward places such as on bends, close to narrow bridges, on both sides of the canal where it is narrow already causing navigation hazards.

Poorly steered boats - the helmsman often has no idea which side of the river they should be on, how fast they should be going.

Towpath littered with rubbish from overnight parties.

Boaters using the Lea Valley Park as both a toilet and as a source of fuel.

Boaters using the river to pump out waste water, dump kitchen waste etc. There has been a significant increase in weed growth over the past five years which may or may not be linked to dumping of waste.

Boaters drunk whilst in charge of their boats.

Generally the issue is that there are too many residential boats using too few facilities which causes pressure. Specifically people have realised that buying a narrowboat and obtaining a continuous cruising licence is a cheap way of living in London and represents a more attractive alternative to squatting. This is not what a continuous cruising licence is intended for of course, but that is the root of the problem. There are, for instance, films on You Tube extolling the virtues of London river living over squatting.

Suggested Solutions:-

More permanent residential moorings. There is obviously a demand and this would represent a good income stream for the Canal and Rivers Trust. There are stretches of the Lea that would support permanent moorings without compromising navigation. Permanent moorings would ensure proper facilities so less abuse of the river and local environment.

Stricter enforcement of the continuous cruising licences. Boats do at present simply shuttle back and forth to try to meet the requirements of the licence.

Local mooring rules dictating where visiting boats might, and might not, moor.

Stricter boat inspections and standards.

Increased powers for the Canal trust to fine owners or ultimately seize boats that continuously flout the rules.

Regular towpath patrols by the Canal and Rivers Trust to enforce existing regulations and monitor boat movements.

British Waterways have tried to grasp this nettle in the past. I attended a meeting organised by British Waterways at Leaside Canoe Club at which the British Waterways officials were faced with a very vocal and aggressive group of narrowboaters who said at one point that British Waterways should regard themselves as a quasi housing association! People said they had jobs to commute to and kids in local schools - hardly the profile of a continuous cruiser.

As a rower I can see the attractions of living on the river. There is room for more narrow boats but not under the present chaotic system at the root of which is the abuse of the spirit of the continuous cruising licence.

Yours sincerely

Richard Ellis

Dear Mr Williamson,

I am writing because I am deeply concerned by the illegal moorings taking place on the Grand Union canal on the Hormead Road section. I have a ground floor flat which gives onto the canal - well should I say gave onto the canal. Recently, barges have been mooring on our side of the canal which means that I now have neighbours I did not used to have. Beyond the visual and auditive discomfort, I find it alarming regarding security. We have no idea who these people are and they are mooring with easy access to the back gardens of all the residents. I would like to believe that we live in a society where trust can prevail, however the burglary 3 years ago through my back garden makes me feel otherwise.

I would therefore like to know what can be done to ensure that these barges are not allowed to moor on our side of the canal, exposing our homes to further insecurity? If not, who is going to fund the barbed wire we will need to put in place to avoid having intruders?

Many thanks.

Kind regards,

Dylan



Dear Ian Williamson,

I regularly use the River Lea as a rower at the Lea Rowing Club and would like the needs of rowers to be taken into account in this investigation.

On the whole boat users of all kinds have a good relationship but problems have arisen over the past couple of years with greatly increased numbers of boats mooring between Tottenham Lock and the Olympic site and what seems to be an increasing lack of observation and enforcement of mooring rules.

The greatest problems are caused by boats double and even triple mooring and badly attached dinghies which float out across the river. This is a particular problem on bends, near narrow bridges, and where boats are moored on both sides of the waterway and is at its worst below Lea Bridge Road.

With an increased number of moving barges and narrowboats as well as rowers and canoeists using the same stretch of river, it is vital that moving boats are able to stay on the correct side of the river in order to safely pass each other. There have already been several incidents when rowers have encountered boats coming in the opposite direction on a bend with nowhere to pass due to badly moored boats, and more serious accidents are becoming increasingly likely.

The club is working hard to encourage more people to take up rowing, with a strong focus on young people, and safety is obviously an important issue.

I hope you will ensure that the needs of rowers are considered.

Thanks

Gillian Symons

Recreational Rower, Lea Rowing Club

For Karen Buck MP reference.

Your Reference PATT01005//01071304

Dear Sorwar,

I have been looking through the aims of the Canal and River Trust – the Memorandum and Articles incorporated 12/10/2011, which are available on the Charity Commission website.

You are quite clearly in breach of various conditions of your charitable aims.

Specifically -

2.6 TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE VICINITY OF ANY INLAND WATERWAY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC, IN PARTICULAR BY:

2.6.1 THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE CONDITIONS OF LIFE IN SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN SUCH VICINITY

The entirely new situation of large scale unofficial temporary mooring opposite to Hornead Road W9 has led to a degradation of the conditions of life for the community in the vicinity. Westminster North is officially an economic deprivation area so perfectly fits the description of an 'economically disadvantaged community'

Your allowing of this new situation to develop has degraded the 'conditions of life' by, amongst many problems -

- Clear and continuous invasion of privacy
- On-going noise pollution through the running of motors for the generation of electricity etc..
- Actual pollution through the burning of fossil fuels, which are illegal under the Clean Air Act.
- Trespassing by boaters on private property
- Creation of a general stress and anxiety due to the above

You know this is true as you have received numerous complaints from residents here which I assume/ hope you have catalogued. It has caused widespread distress in the local community, which key to this breach of your charitable aims is in the 'vicinity' of the canal.

There would be no such record before the Canal Trust took over as this is a completely new situation.

You have argued that these breaches are not the concern of the Canal and River Trust, but of the Local Councils, but I would argue that they specifically fall under condition 2.6.1 and are therefore your responsibility, and therefore your responsibility to deal with.

By failing to police unofficial temporary mooring along this section the Canal and River Trust far from 'improving the conditions of life', has in fact done the opposite and allowed it to degrade.

The only way you can improve conditions is by not allowing any mooring here as any unofficial visitor mooring, however short, contributes to this degradation of 'Conditions of Life' as they potentially can create any of the issues stated above.

To restate slightly laboriously a previous made point – this is not official Temporary Mooring as you have an Official Temporary Mooring at Kensal. Therefore by definition this is not official and people should not be allowed to moor here.

It is arguable that you are also in breach of other aspects of the charitable aims due to the overall degradation of conditions between Little Venice and the Kensal Official Temporary Mooring, for example fly tipping (I have photos) and the driving away of Wildlife which visually decreases when there are many boats, pollution on the water, etc..

This will also have made it less attractive for recreational use, which also has noticeably declined

Specifically –

2.1 TO PRESERVE, PROTECT, OPERATE AND MANAGE INLAND WATERWAYS FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT:

2.1.2 FOR WALKING ON TOWPATHS; AND

2.1.2 FOR RECREATION OR OTHER LEISURE-TIME PURSUITS OF THE PUBLIC IN THE INTEREST OF THEIR HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE;

2.3 TO FURTHER FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT THE CONSERVATION PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPE OF INLAND WATERWAYS;

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Inigo Patten.

Member of the Lea Rowing Club  
23 September 2013

Moorings on London's Waterways  
(attn. Jenny Jones AM)

Dear Ms. Jones, Mr. Williamson and members of the Health and Environment Committee of the GLA and the London Assembly,

I am writing as a frequent user of the Lea (or Lee) Navigation between Tottenham Lock and Old Ford, an area heavily populated by moored river craft. As someone who commonly rows along that stretch a few times each week all year around (as is usual for most Lea Rowing Club members), I have grave concern about the supply and demand of moorings, and especially about rules and their enforcement.

The increase in number of canal boats and the lax compliance with rules and guidelines for the use of the river has increased the dangers to rowers, canoeists, kayakers and other small boat users. Rowers in particular are often endangered by poorly moored boats, multiple moored boats, loosely tethered dinghies, and canal boats that are incompetently piloted while mooring. Small, unpowered craft are especially vulnerable and we must have some degree of trust in others being law-abiding, sensible and cognizant of the norms of river usage. When order on the river breaks down everybody is imperiled, often it is we first.

We in the Lea Rowing Club and others through British Rowing (the national governing body for rowing) frequently report accidents and near-accidents involving canal narrowboats and other craft, often associated with problems to do with mooring on our stretch. I believe that more sensible guidelines for safe moorings, as presented by the Lea Rowing Club, and in particular more diligent enforcement of existing rules would be an important step to resolving conflicts on the waterways. They would also assist in making boating safer for all.

Your truly,  
Jonathan Liebenau

Dear Ian Williamson,

I am writing to voice my concern about the on going situation with illegal long term staying of barges along the stretch of the canal boarding on Meanwhile Gardens I should like to make you aware of the increase activity of barges taking long term residence this has led to anti social behaviour urinating and defecating in Meanwhile Gardens I walk my dog early in the morning and also in the evening and have witness this spectacle in disbelief, during the summer months it was very annoying with the music and parties going on, the stretch of the canal is too narrow for any short/ long term occupation. As a transient group I feel that they have no responsibility and courtesy to the community.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my concerns

Dear Mr Williamson,

I would like to express my concern about the influx of barges moored alongside Meanwhile Gardens.

I understood, when the boats arrived, that this was a temporary measure because of the Olympic Games but they have never gone away.

There are no facilities for these boats - especially no bins. Rubbish has been dropped overboard, dog poo, and my neighbours (more than one) have witnessed one boat owner defecating over the side of his boat. There is general noise and nuisance and a decrease in wildlife.

Our tranquil lives have been adversely affected by these boats. There are so many places on the canal without houses or flats alongside, why are these boats not mooring there instead? It seems perverse for them to moor exactly where they are affecting many residents.

Thank you,

Elaine Arthur

Drear Jenny,

Further to the Commission's meeting on 15 July, and your presentation on residential boats on canals,

I've consulted colleagues in the West London River Group.

While you spoke about residential boats on the canals you indicated your consultation included residential boats on the Thames.

The attached short paper attempts to set out the relevant issues on the river.

You will see that there are pressures here as well, although perhaps somewhat different from the canals, but also some strongly held views.

We look forward to seeing the outcome of your consultation.

We would be happy to contribute further if appropriate.

With kind regards.

Yours, Roger Weston

Dear Ian,

the manager of Meanwhile Gardens (the park adjoining the canal) asked me to forward this email to you, so that her concerns about these W10 moorings can be registered in the consultation.

Best wishes,

Elaine Arthur.

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Subject: FW: Boaters mooring alongside Meanwhile Gardens London W10

Date: Fri, 11 Oct 2013 15:22:24

To Whom It May Concern:

Meanwhile Gardens is a four acre community garden situated alongside part of the Grand Union Canal in London W10. Since the run up to the London Olympics we have witnessed an increased number of boats mooring alongside this stretch of the canal and as a result our small staff team and volunteers have been bearing the consequence of inadequate facilities for the boaters. We have a significant amount of rubbish dumped on the gardens from the canal boaters which has recently lead to an infestation of rats at a location where boaters are clearly leaving their rubbish.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Project Manager



Hi Ian

I've heard you might also be able to help so I'm forwarding my email to you.

Many thanks

Liz

On Monday, 14 October 2013, 19:04, Elizabeth

Hi

I hope you can help. I live in Hornead Road W9 and my flat backs onto the canal. I've owned my flat since 2007 and there have never been boats moored along the part of the canal my flat backs onto, apart from the Notting Hill Carnival and the Olympics, both of which I understood to be temporary due to the popularity of the events but in recent months boats have been moored permanently.

The view out of the window to the canal is not only the main selling point of my flat but also the bit I personally enjoy most and the reason I bought the flat. In June someone dug up all the grass alongside the canal on our side of the street where the geese used to sit and now they don't sit there anymore. It's horrible to look out on mud instead of grass.

Then last week one of the boats moored behind the house and dug a trench leading from the canal to the back garden wall. It's an eyesore!

There is a footpath on the other side of the canal so you do get people occasionally walking past but now I feel I have to have my curtain shut as the boats can look in - it's as if a building full of neighbours was constructed looking into our flats without any of us in the road having been consulted? They make noise too so it's not just the overlooking aspect.

I really hope you can help with this situation and move the boats along. There is plenty of room up by the Cemetery where there are no neighbours or in Little Venice where people know there is permanent mooring.

There should not have been a decision to allow permanent mooring backing onto people's flats without Hornead Road having been consulted so I do hope that is not the case and that instead you can move these people along?

Many thanks

Liz