



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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10 May 2016

### **BOAT OWNERS' SURVEY SHOWS INCREASE IN SATISFACTION**

The Canal & River Trust's latest Boat Owners' Views survey shows an increase in the proportion of licence holders across England and Wales that trust the charity to look after the waterways. There is also a greater awareness of the Trust's activities and an increase in those who feel that resources are being spent where most needed.

63% of boaters said that they trust the charity to look after the waterways, up from 58% in 2014. The survey shows that there is variation across different demographics, with those with a home mooring or who use the waterways for leisure being most content.

Almost half the respondents (48%) now say they know the Trust very well or a fair amount, up from 35% in 2013/14. This suggests that the charity has improved its communications and is being more open and transparent, and potentially indicates that people have a greater understanding of the Trust's work beyond being simply a licence provider.

Boaters are also more likely to agree that the Trust "priorities its spending on what I feel is most needed" with 40% agreeing compared to 30% in 2014.

A working group is now taking an in-depth look at the results to see what needs to be improved upon and what is working well. The Trust will provide updates on any actions that will be taken as a result of the research.

Mike Grimes, head of boating at Canal & River Trust, said: "The Boat Owners' Views survey is really important to help understand what's working well and areas where we can improve things for boaters. It's heartening that a growing number of boaters have faith in us to look after the waterways for their benefit, but it is clear that there is still some way to go.

"The survey also shows that there's a growing polarisation between boaters' views. Licence holders have passionately held, often opposing opinions, and we will use the results to help us understand our customers' differing needs. What boaters all have in common is the desire to

protect our canals and rivers and preserve the right and ability to navigate them. This is at the core of our mission too and we must all work together to ensure we get the right balance.”

The survey, which was sent to a third of the Trust’s boat licence holders, was carried out by the independent research consultancy BDRC Continental between 25 February and 25 March 2016. It will be repeated each year with the aim of having contacted the majority of boaters on the Trust’s waters in each three-year cycle.

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**For further media requests please contact:**

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**Notes to editors**