

PRESS RELEASE

31 January 2022

CHARITY COMMITTED TO IMPROVING LONDON'S WATERWAYS FOR BOATERS

The Canal & River Trust, the charity that cares for 100 miles of waterways across London, is providing an update on the progress of its London Mooring Strategy, which aims to improve the moorings and facilities available to boaters whilst fairly balancing the needs of everyone who uses the capital's waters.

This year the Trust is investing around £6m in maintaining and improving the London and the South East region's waterways for boaters to navigate and for people to enjoy from the towpath. In addition, to date, over £300k has been invested as part of the London Mooring Strategy, with significantly more spend planned over the next two years.

Following thorough investigation into potential sites in 2021, the Trust is creating three quarters of a mile of new towpath mooring space in central London, installing approximately 150 rings into the concrete edge on the Grand Union Canal, Regent's Canal and Limehouse Cut. Work is due to commence in February. Vegetation will be cut back on the Limehouse Cut to make new and existing rings accessible as part of this work.

The Trust has also carried out a dredging survey which identified a half-mile stretch at Norwood Top Lock where dredging would significantly improve the ability to moor. This work is currently being scheduled for this spring. Additionally, early in 2022, the Trust will be spot-dredging and installing new mooring rings at Steele Road in West London so that boaters can moor up to use the waste facilities there. The Trust is investing £65k in the work to these two sites.

To balance out the environmental impact of the installation of new moorings and potential habitat loss due to shading from boats, the Trust will be installing marginal habitat on the Regent's Canal below Ben Johnsons Lock. This will mature into a reed bed within five years creating habitat for juvenile fish, invertebrates, nesting birds and amphibians.

Investigations into the feasibility of potential new or improved customer service facilities are continuing in 2022 with the aim of installing further facilities this year and again in 2023. The

Canal & River Trust, Toll House, Delamere Terrace, London, W2 6ND

T: 0203 3204 4514 **E:** press.office@canalrivertrust.org.uk **W:** www.canalrivertrust.org.uk **Twitter:** [@CanalRiverTrust](https://twitter.com/CanalRiverTrust)

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Trust has run initial checks and service searches on ten potential sites and will be exploring six of these further over the coming months to see if any are viable for development (Enfield, Steele Road, Old Ford Lock, Old Oak Lane, Horse & Barge, and East Wick). Four other sites, including Bull's Bridge, Paddington Basin, Springwell, and Pickett's Lock, were investigated but have proved not to be viable.

Alongside these key infrastructure and facilities works, the Trust has contributed funding towards a pilot scheme for composting waste, responding to the growing use of separator toilets. Start-up business Circular Revolution is operating a year-long pilot providing an 'at your mooring' service collecting composting toilet waste, initially covering East London and now extended to Central and West London.

Ros Daniels, Canal & River Trust regional director, said: "London's waterways are some of the most exciting, interesting and vibrant in the country, and boaters are an integral part of what makes them so special. London is extremely popular with both local and visiting boats, which means the waterways face some unique challenges as the 200-year-old infrastructure struggles to keep up with this record number of boats.

"I'm pleased that, after a year of rigorous investigations, we are creating three quarters of a mile of mooring spaces for boaters. In a bustling city, finding sites that meet the size and access requirements for new water and waste facilities has been a struggle, but we're now pleased to have found a number of promising spots that we'll be exploring further in 2022. Our role is to protect and preserve the waterways and these improvements should benefit all those boaters who use London's canals and rivers."

For a full list of progress on 'you said, we did' changes, please see:

canalrivertrust.org.uk/londonmooringstrategy

The Strategy, which was published in 2018 to help manage the increasing demand for boating in central London, acknowledged that if boat numbers continued to rise then additional measures would need to be investigated to ensure the waterways are managed safely and are available fairly for everyone. The Trust is now consulting on proposals; further information can be found here: canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/london-and-south-east/managing-boats-on-londons-busy-waterways.

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For further media requests please contact:

Fran Read, Canal & River Trust

m 07796 610 427 e fran.read@canalrivertrust.org.uk