



Lea Rowing Club  
Via email

14<sup>th</sup> February 2022

### **Water Safety Zone: Removal of grab bars**

As previously discussed, we are aware that a member of the Lea Rowing Club removed four grab bars from a section of bank on the Lea on or around Thursday 3rd February 2022. This was done without our knowledge or authority, and such actions are totally unacceptable.

Safety is our first priority and these grab bars were in situ to aid egress from the water. We will therefore ensure that any safety measures required to help people exit the water in an emergency at this location are reinstated as soon as possible. As agreed, I expect the Lea Rowing Club to meet the costs incurred in addressing this safety measure.

As you know the Police have been asked to investigate this reckless action. We have indicated to the Police that, given the contrition shown by the Rowing Club, and the commitment you have given that there will be no repeat, we will not press charges against the Club on this occasion. If any such action is undertaken in the future the Trust will not hesitate to pursue legal action against those responsible.

The Trust puts equal weight on the safety of all river users and manages the waterways to ensure everyone can enjoy the benefit of being on the water safely. The Trust remains deeply disappointed with the actions taken by the Lea Rowing Club, despite the ongoing efforts to provide a forum in which the issues and differences of opinion regarding the Water Safety Zone can be addressed constructively. We believe that the actions taken by Lea Rowing Club are contrary to the spirit in which the Trust continues to engage with all parties across the River Lea to facilitate a long-term viable solution to the concerns expressed by all stakeholders.

Canal & River Trust

London & South East Region

#### **Canal & River Trust**

The Toll House Delamere Terrace Little Venice London W2 6ND

**T:** 0303 040 4040 **E:** [canalrivertrust.org.uk/contact-us](mailto:canalrivertrust.org.uk/contact-us) **W:** [canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk)