



Water Safety Zone Update

27 October 2021

During the summer the Canal & River Trust engaged the independent facilitators Hopkins Van Mil to speak with stakeholders and listen to their ideas and concerns about the proposed water safety zones on the Lee. Last month Hopkins Van Mil published their [report](#), and we published [our response and next steps](#).

Explaining the existing rules

We're currently following the first recommendation in the report – explaining and enforcing the existing rules and regulations. The recommendations were generated via independently facilitated stakeholder engagement, and this one came strongly from all participants.

These rules are not new or specific to London and are intended to provide a safe framework for everyone using waterways across the country, including the Lee. It became apparent through the engagement process that not everyone was familiar with the rules of the river and mooring.

To help communicate and explain the rules, this month we have begun daily walks along the Lee speaking with boaters and advising them on existing areas where boats shouldn't be moored, for example on bends, on particularly narrow stretches and by bridges. Staff from District Enforcement have been working with us to help us reach more boaters. Alongside this, we have begun to put up 'no mooring' signs to help make clear existing areas where boats should not be moored. Please look out for the staff on the towpath and talk with them if you have any questions.

Defining and managing no-mooring sections falls within our powers as the navigation authority for the river. Our [Mooring Obligations Booklet](#) and [Boater's Handbook](#) give information on why boats should not moor in certain places, including amongst others:

- In locks, lock approaches or in lock flights
- Blocking taps and other services unless you are using them
- Near any bridges
- Under fixed bridges
- Near weirs
- Near sharp bends
- On the outside of bends

On the Lee, over the years, some of these spots have been moored on by boaters who may not be familiar with the rules. We appreciate that this history means some boaters expect to be able to moor at these types of sites and may not understand why they're not suitable for mooring. To give time for boaters to understand where these no mooring sections are, we will not begin to enforce our existing improper mooring process until later in November.

Lee Navigation Forum

As recommended in the report, a new independently facilitated Lee Navigation Forum (LNF) has been established to review the actions set out in the independent facilitators' report and look at measures to help make the Lee safer for everyone. The first meeting of the LNF was held on Tuesday 12 October. The forum includes representatives from liveaboard boaters (NBTA, NABO), leisure boaters (cruising clubs, Leaside Trust), rowing clubs, commercial operators (boat hire, canoe hire, fuel boat/freight operator), Lee Valley Regional Park and the Canal & River Trust. Representatives from angling clubs on the Lee will also be invited to future meetings. Notes from the forum meeting will be published on the [Water Safety Zone web page](#).

Please report water safety accidents or near misses

It's important that we know about any accident or 'near misses' so that we can try and reduce the risk of these happening in future. You can help by reporting anything you've witnessed or been involved in while visiting or using our waterways and towpaths. The information you give will help us to investigate the cause, minimise the risk of it happening again and, where practical, remove potential hazards.

The easiest way to report an incident is complete our online contact form or call 0303 040 4040 during normal office hours. Please provide as much detail as you can, including information on any craft involved or people who could help us if we need to investigate further.

Please see our [contact us in an emergency](#) page to see who to call when it's urgent (if you can, save these emergency contact details in your phone in case you need them in future).