



Camboaters Community Association
camboaterscommittee@gmail.com

Dear Councillor,

The Council has recently spent a very considerable sum of money in running a consultation on moorings policy in Cambridge. The views expressed by Cambridge residents in that consultation are very clear – and we trust that you will listen to them.

77% of responses to the consultation were in favour of keeping moorings on Riverside*

84% of responses to the consultation were in favour of retaining the existing fee structure*

*these numbers include those who responded by email rather than through the questionnaire so differ slightly from your officer's analysis. It's an overwhelming majority whichever numbers you take though.

We are very grateful that some of the most damaging and unfair proposals in the original consultation document have now been dropped. However, we are shocked that, despite the clear views expressed in the consultation, the Council is still proposing to move the vast majority of boats from Riverside (allowing just a token handful to remain) – and is proposing a 33% increase in mooring fees for single boaters.

We'd be very grateful if you could bear in mind the following points whilst deliberating the proposals on mooring policy on monday:

Lack of consultation on removal of single occupancy discount

The proposal to remove the single occupancy discount has come as a complete surprise to boaters. It wasn't mentioned in the consultation document at all, although it was perfectly open to Council officers to include it in the consultation questionnaire had they wished to.

The single occupancy discount is fair and sensible. It performs exactly the same function for boaters as the equivalent discount for Council Tax payers – it reflects the fact that it costs significantly less to provide services to one person rather than to two or more.

Removing it would hit those least able to pay the hardest, and goes directly against the clear view expressed in the consultation that there should be no large fee increases. We hope that you will agree that this is not a fair or reasonable proposal, and will vote against it.

Budget figures

The budget in the documents provided to you for costs and income from the river moorings are highly misleading. The budget appears to have included only income from mooring licences, but not from Council Tax raised from those moored on Riverside, from the commercial moorings opposite Jesus Green, or pump out receipts. The figures for expenditure seem to include a number of internal transfers to other Council budgets and to the Conservators of the Cam which are questionable at best. At meetings we have had with Council officers they have been unable to explain how many of the figures given were reached.

Boaters get essentially no services and facilities at all other than waste collection, two water points and a pump out (which we have to pay separately for). The idea that this costs £85,000 or more is absurd.

Much of the budget appears to be spent on staff time and consultations which relate largely to Riverside rather than the Commons. It's not reasonable that those living on the Commons should be expected to pay those costs.

Our assessment is that the revenue raised from River Mooring Licences is already considerably greater than Council expenditure on facilities and services provided under the moorings scheme. If this is accepted, then the need to raise more money by removing the single occupancy discount disappears.

Riverside

Consultation responses were overwhelmingly in favour of keeping all moorings on Riverside – as was also the case for previous consultations. The Council should be putting effort into making that a reality.

The logic that is put forward in the report for not installing new gates in the railings to make provision for a larger number of moorings is deeply flawed. It is argued that if any modifications are made to the railings, then the whole lot have to be replaced at a cost of up to £1.5 million. This is clearly absurd. Several changes have been made to the railings in recent years - a number of gates were welded shut, and a large section was removed when the new cycle bridge was built - without there being any requirement to replace the whole lot.

It may be the case that installing a new gate at a given point in the railings could mean that it has to be upgraded to vehicle containment standards at that point, and that should of course be costed. But it's clearly not the case that putting a gate at one end of the railings would require railings half a mile away at the other end to be replaced.

Upgrading the barrier where new gates are installed could be easily and cheaply achieved by installing a pair of bollards either side of the new gate. We would like you to ask Council Officers to prepare costings for this option. Without this information you cannot make an informed decision on whether a scheme to permit mooring of 30 – 40 boats on Riverside (clearly the public's preferred option based on the consultation responses) is economic. A decision on removing boats from Riverside should be deferred until this information is available.

Assessment of housing needs

The Council have not yet undertaken an assessment of housing needs for those living in houseboats as required under the Housing and Planning Act 2016. Such an assessment is highly relevant to a large reduction in the number of moorings in the City. We would like the Council to delay a decision on Riverside until such an assessment has been carried out. We are astonished that it was not carried out as part of the consultation process.

Suggested amendments

We would like to suggest the following amendments to the proposals that officers have brought forward:

- That the proposal to remove the single occupancy discount is dropped
- That a decision on removing boats from Riverside is deferred until an assessment of housing needs for houseboats as required by the Housing and Planning Act 2016 has been carried out
- That officers are requested to develop costings for installing a larger number of gates and mooring points in the Riverside railings to permit the mooring of a larger number of boats, with only the minimum works made to the railings to provide a vehicle containment barrier at those points only (for example by installing bollards beside the gates).

yours sincerely,



Andy Rankin

on behalf of Camboaters Community Association Committee