

Consultation Responses received by direct email

1 Fri 20/01/2017 16:52

I have spent the last 45 minutes completing the consultation via Survey Monkey which at the very last page suddenly did not forward me to the next page which means that I have not been able to submit my point of view. When I tried to retrieve the survey I initially could not do so however after another attempt I was able to reconnect to the site at which point a message flashed up thanking me for completing the survey. I cannot be sure that my response has reached you so I would be very grateful if you would let me know if it has.

In case it hasn't the text below broadly speaking reflects my opinion however as there are only 8 more minutes before the survey closes they will suffice.

Please don't move boaters on from Riverside wall - they have been there for longer than many of the local houses and they are an important part of our city.

Boats add colour and vibrancy to Cambridge. They offer a rare form of low-impact housing in the city, and allow an affordable way of life for those who care little for consumerism, like to be independent, wish to be self-sufficient and want to live in an environmentally sound fashion. Please don't carry out your threat to reduce the numbers of residential boaters in the city by a third.

Please don't double mooring fees either. Please stick to the existing simple fee structure that covers the cost of running the mooring scheme with plenty to spare.

Please stick to your previous commitments to find a way to integrate Riverside into the Council mooring scheme, and to base fees on the cost of providing services to boaters rather than the maximum you think you can get from them.

2 Fri 20/01/2017 16:25

I hope you will reconsider your proposals with regard to boats on the Riverside wall. Having had a chance to get to know some of the people who live on the boats, it is an important way of life for them, both economically and culturally, and it is important for those who do not live there also to keep their interests in mind.

3 Fri 20/01/2017 14:20

Rowing has been an important sport in Cambridge for some two hundred years, and is by no means the preserve of the rich and foolish as is sometimes portrayed. Nowadays, there are some thousands of participants each year, perhaps 4-5000,

young and not-so-young, approximately in equal numbers men and women, members of the town, university and college clubs. Their interests as residents of Cambridge need to be taken into account. I am therefore pleased to endorse the submission from the president of CRA, below and attached, on behalf of the university and college clubs.

4 Fri 20/01/2017 12:44

I have attached an important document relating to navigation of rowing craft along Riverside. This was presented at a public meeting in February 2013.

Also included are direct measurements of depth and width of the river along this stretch which were taken by myself and Adrian Hoyle, River Bailiff.

I'm concerned that the Conservators of the River Cam have not properly addressed the navigation issue and are yet to decide the safe minimum river width in the light of these figures.

Any decision on the future of mooring along Riverside should also address the Navigation situation.

As a regular rower I can assure you that there is a real safety issue.

Another problem that has not been resolved is that moored vessels prevent the use of safety chains that are positioned along this stretch.

For and on behalf of University and Town Rowing Clubs

5 Mon 16/01/2017 15:21

I have a understanding of the present system as I did live on a boat for a while. I welcome the review as leaving the river is one of my regrets. Once you have a Mooring licence I think it is very difficult to lose it.

I would welcome closer monitoring which in turn I think it would promote better standards for some. Not keeping to a new guide could result in the loss of your licence.

This would result in others being given the opportunity to apply for one and live on the river.

Those who live by the river have to pay a premium for the pleasure. I think it should be the same for those who live on it.

6 Sun 15/01/2017 21:02

I have completed your riverside consultation but unfortunately clicked the done button before I had a chance to add my comments. Firstly in your information you quote 'residents whose properties overlook and/or are adjacent to the river have raised concerns over....particularly enforcement against vessels without consent (?), overstays and subletting. No disrespect but how do they know these things. In my experience this is usually an issue only between the interested parties. Secondly I would imagine that Cam Con only register as many vessels of whatever variety as are SAFE for our river. Another point is surely the removal of illegally moored vessels are the remit of the council and not anything to do with the rest of the law abiding tax paying boaties. You also mention 'traffic free tow path' I have never observed any pedestrian or cyclist unable to navigate the 'tow path'. Finally the question of bio-diversity and nature and my answer to that is as most boats are either stationary or slow moving the only threat to nature is overdevelopment or a "148%increase in rowers"!

7 Wed 30/11/2016 19:13

In response to the moorings consultation, I would like to agree with the City Council's proposals to: move all boats moored along the wall on Riverside, extinguish all temporary mooring licenses, and to relate mooring fees to the size of boats.

I did respond to the last consultation and corresponded on the subject in August 2013, please see attached. My views have not changed despite the Streets and Open Spaces Team becoming involved since then. My greatest concern is health and safety, any risk assessment would identify a major incident waiting to happen. Sometimes young children are on the boats moored along the wall and the only access is over the fence from the road. Since the last consultation the same old problems exist, to greater or lesser degrees: noxious smoke, noise from generators, rubbish, parking, dogs, and probably effluent as most boats do not move from their mooring to discharge.

It would seem difficult, if not impossible, to control the comings and goings of boats mooring along Riverside, even the notices prohibiting mooring were removed – unofficially! Well maintained boats are an attractive feature of the Cam riverbanks, however the boaters who do not follow the mooring policy and procedures spoil the environment for everyone.

I would hope that the income from mooring covers all of the costs involved: maintenance of moorings, enforcement, legal and administrative expenditure but also the capital expenditure needed to provide the facilities that such a large boating community require.

8 Wed 30/11/2016 10:37

As a long time resident in the centre of the city I hope that the council can reach a fair conclusion over this issue . It is essential to see these boats as peoples homes first and foremost . Thus it would be completely

unfair to double their charges and thus run the risk of making people homeless . We already have far too many people struggling with homelessness with out adding to their numbers.

I think the Cam conservators may have too much influence in this area . As a regular canoeist on the Cam I know that the boats moored on the railings do not impede navigation . [for that look at the effect of the massive growth of ? penny wort virtually blocking the river towards Granchester]

I agree that if boats are abandoned for a length of time there should be a warning period before removing them.It is the rowers who are more likely to constitute a nuisance to other river users not to mention the wild life.Novice rowers often crash into residential boats causing damage and waking owners in the early morning . The Cam Boaters are our neighbours trying to manage working and family lives . Since very few people can afford to buy or rent homes in central Cambridge those living on the boats are making a rational choice . At the same time they add interest and difference to our community .I would certainly put their needs before visiting boats who only stay for a short time and add very little to the city . Please do not penalise the boaters by imposing greatly increased charges there would be uproar if you increased the council charge for householders in a similar way . This issue could become national making Cambridge Council look prejudiced and narrow minded

9 Wed 30/11/2016 10:34

I have tried to complete your consultation document but it will not respond. Therefore I am sending an email. I would like to ALSO complete your form. Please advise me on how to do this.

I have lived in Riverside for 20 years and seen a deterioration in the boats illegally using Riverside. The following points are not in order of importance- they are all valid and together should be the basis of future policy.

1. Riverside will see changes early in 2017. The Stourbridge Common entrance will be changed. There will be better access for all, including mobility vehicles (which are increasing in number as the population lives longer) Indeed part of the funds for the entrance are specifically for those who are disabled.

2. The changes include reduced parking and a designated area alongside the railings (marked on the road) to complete the Riverwalk which was started at the

Midsummer Common end. This will be SAFER for those with disability vehicles (manual wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs and scooters maximum 4mph. Those with speeds above must legally use the road) Also walkers, joggers, and especially the families which regularly use Riverside for pleasure and exercise.

3. Currently owners park alongside their boats. Riverside is therefore an attractive proposition. As the Riverwalk will only be designated by lines/shading there is concern that boat owners will ignore this.

4. There is discussion about housing need. Often the boats are not lived in. I understand that the word HOUSE in house boats is part of the agreement with the council.

5. The river is under constant use. The idea of pontoons etc. is not credible. Have the rowing clubs been consulted? The Riverwalk is designed to create a scenic route between Stourbridge and Midsummer Commons. Those using it should be able to enjoy the river wild life and activities without any hindrance. It is an asset for all including tourists.

6. There is already damage from boats tying tyres etc. to the newly decorated railings. My understanding is that boats should ensure that their fenders have buffers ON the BOATS. Those on the commons do this.

7. A houseboat is cheap accommodation. Boat owners should therefore be able to pay enough in fees to cover any improvement in the river edge and certainly sufficient to pay for ENFORCEMENT of MOORING regulations. AND enough to remove boats illegally moored both the physical act and any court proceedings.

8. The length of the waiting list for moorings in Cambridge may be the inexpensive mooring fees. More realistic fees (Paragraph 7) may reduce the length of the list and make selection easier.

8. Some boaters have classed themselves as a minority group because they are 'travellers'. Some of the boats parked within view of my house appear to be floating platforms with wooden and tarpaulin covered extensions. I doubt they could travel anywhere.

The necessity of parking our mobility vehicles opposite my house together with the removal of a boat similar to that in paragraph 8. has given an example of how Riverside could be. I have witnessed daily the resulting short stretch, with clearer view of the river, encouraging walkers and rowing coaches to stop safely.

10 Mon 28/11/2016 15:55

I am the owner of number XX Riverside and I wish to add my support to the current proposals, particularly relating to the removal of all moorings alongside the public

road. The river is far too busy in this area with rowers and other traffic. Perhaps provision could be introduced on the edge of Lammas Land via a hard footpath. I would like to be kept informed on this important exercise please.

11 Mon 21/11/2016 23:30

The City Council has recently announced a consultation on the mooring of houseboats along Riverside Road. It goes some way to redress the lack of planning permission for the de-facto permanent mooring of these boats.

As a resident of Cambridge and a member of a town rowing club I am in disbelief that there appears to be one law for houseboat dwellers deciding to squat on premises not belonging to them but a different law for say, travellers in a caravan deciding to set themselves up similarly on Jesus Green.

In the Cambridge News houseboat dwellers have been spinning this consultation as a sly clash between “white male elitist” university rowers and poor working class people who risk becoming homeless. Suffice it to say that such shrill name calling is bigoted and offensive. It may be a gripping narrative for hardcore Maoists who mentally live in the early 20th century. But today Cambridge rowing involves people from many different countries and income disparity. It would be far more constructive if houseboat dwellers reached out to other river users through dialogue. Avoiding mooring at bottlenecks on the river would be a welcome start.

Moreover it does seem rich to categorize houseboats dwellers barred from a location on a river as being “homeless”. Homeless people living on the streets are far more vulnerable and in need of help than houseboat owners who seem resourceful and organised enough to live on a boat.

Rowing has been an integral part of Cambridge for more than a century and includes not just of students. The majority of the about 4000 people involved enjoy using the River Cam for keeping fit, coaching, socialise and volunteering around races. Occasionally this leads to Olympic medallists such as Anna Watkins and George Nash to mention but a few. Likewise many employees working in all sectors of society, say the science parks or the NHS have chosen to live in Cambridge because the river allows them to row and compete for many years outside of work.

That this consultation stresses the use of the River Cam in terms of leisure but without mentioning competitive rowing misses the point that Cambridge, unlike other towns of similar size, is a city with an unusually large number of high achievers. Such people often need an additional outlet for their talents, be it rowing or another activity outside of work. In this sense rowing is just hallmark of the Cambridge Phenomenon. There are many other hallmarks, such as the rich intellectual life and cultural diversity we all cherish. All these traits will remain inseparable as long as the city keeps attracting exceptionally talented and outstanding individuals world-wide.

Once this consultation is over the City Council may decide it wants to placate about 50 or so vociferous houseboat dwellers mooring without permission. Or it may decide it wants to ensure the river remains attractive to the far greater number of people who see Cambridge as a fantastic place to work and row. Perhaps it will achieve both, perhaps it will not.

12 Thu 17/11/2016 19:39

I have lived on Riverside since 2005. During that period, my family and I have encountered a number of persistent problems with our boater neighbours:

- dumping of rubbish on our property (necessitating the fitting of security locks on our rubbish stores in 2006);
- sinking/abandoned vessels and consequent vermin infestation;
- late night domestic disturbance;
- open smoking of drugs;
- a chronic and continuing issue with the burning of noxious materials (mainly old wooden pallets) in breach of smokeless fuel regulations; on some occasions, the smoke has been so thick it has posed a threat to cycle and vehicular traffic as well as deeply unpleasant for pedestrians;
- late night running of noisy generators;
- loud music;
- illegal parking;
- the dumping of rubbish at the roadside;
- the illegal attachment of screens, flags and signage to the river railings;
- the parking of a boat under repair on the street at the foot of the Tesco footpath for a number of weeks until it was forcibly removed by the Council;
- noisy and inconsiderate rebuilding of vessels along the railings;
- defacement of mooring regulation signage;
- stray dogs;
- false accusations of harassment made against me by a boater whom I had never met who was later cautioned by police for waste of police time;

- threats of physical violence made against me on my own doorstep late at night after I addressed a Council meeting on behalf of residents.

As you can judge, my overall experience of the boaters on Riverside has been a strongly negative one. The boats along Riverside in general appear shoddy, poorly maintained and are unsightly. A blight on the neighbourhood.

Frankly, I can see nothing positive this waterborne community contributes to our area. A review of the Cambridge Evening News will reveal that there have been simmering tensions along Riverside for years.

Over the last decade, I have found the Cam Conservancy deeply unhelpful in dealing with issues of concern we have raised. In particular, Dr Pippa Noone, the River manager, has proven obstructive and biased against those of us who live on the land rather than water.

Please respect my request for anonymity in this submission. I live in fear of violence from the more aggressive members of the boater community and I do not wish my family' safety to be put at risk.

13 Mon 14/11/2016 16:05

I am writing to express my dismay at the proposed changes to the moorings along Riverside. These will make large numbers of people homeless many of whom have lived there for many years.

I live in a flat overlooking Riverside. The boats are part of the character of this area and their removal would make this part of the river a much sadder and more featureless place.

I have no issue at all with the people who live in these boats. A much greater nuisance are the rowers who regularly wake us, often before 7 a.m., by shouting loudly and using microphones to amplify the noise.

Please add my voice to the many others who are calling on you to review your proposals for this area of Cambridge.

14 Sat 12/11/2016 07:26

I lived on my boat on Riverside a few years ago and am writing in support of the boaters who now live there.

Boats have been there for many years and the boaters are an important part of the city of Cambridge.

They are a diverse bunch of people but are generally promoting a more sustainable way of life. They are providing housing for themselves and demonstrating that a low impact way of life is possible.

Riverside itself is just a concrete river bank and provides no wildlife habitat and so in that sense it is an ideal mooring spot.

I no longer live in Cambridge but work with many people who do. Everyone loves to see the boats on the River Cam! It's part of Cambridge!

Increasing the mooring fees is also outrageous. When I was involved with Camboaters many years back, we worked very hard with the council to develop a fair and affordable mooring scheme. To suddenly increase fees will make life extremely hard for many boaters in Cambridge. They want to pay to contribute to city life but the contribution needs to remain proportionate and affordable.

15 Wed 09/11/2016 02:36

I have some comments on the proposed changes (and non-changes) to moorings policy in Cambridge.

I live neither on a boat nor in Cambridge; I live in Cottenham and like most people in the Cambridge villages spend substantial time in Cambridge itself.

Mooring licence fees

I have no strong opinion on what level these should be set at, but would strongly urge that they not be changed abruptly: that would be unfair to existing licence holders.

If after careful consideration the Council decides that the fees "should" be twice what they are, then perhaps they could go up 15% above inflation each year for the next five years. That would allow the occupants of boats in Cambridge to plan ahead.

But, although the consultation document is absolutely right to say that residential mooring and social housing are separate matters, I think it is important to ask: if the cost of residential mooring goes up a lot, who are the people that will be affected? If -- and I don't know any of the statistics on this -- the Council is considering fee increases whose effect would be that a substantial number of people would no longer be able to afford to live in their present homes, then it would be iniquitous for the Council to ignore that on the grounds that boats are not social housing.

So: If (and I repeat that I don't know the statistics) a substantial number of current holders of residential mooring licences would have difficulty affording any increased

fee being considered, that should be regarded as a strong reason *not* to make such an increase.

(And no, "if we make people homeless by raising the mooring fees, they will receive the same help from the Council that other homeless people do" is not any sort of answer to that.)

So: Option 1.1: don't know but I can well believe that raising the fees would be reasonable; option 1.2: don't know but *abruptly* raising the fees would be very bad and raising them a lot (even if gradually) might also be very bad; option 1.3: yes, they should be set by considering (a) the cost of the services currently being provided or planned for the future and (b) the impact of any changes on the residents of these boats; the levels of fees charged elsewhere are possibly interesting but there's no particular reason why Cambridge's fees should be the same as those of other providers who doubtless provide different services, have different stakeholders, etc., etc., etc.

Penalties for overstaying visitor moorings

The proposed £100 penalty seems reasonable to me.

So: Option 2.1: yes.

Pricing by width and length

It seems reasonable on the face of it for fees to depend on resources consumed. Usable mooring space is one such resource but not the only one.

(Please imagine me to have repeated here what I said above about fee increases. Consider impact on people affected, make any large increases gradual, etc.)

What the document says about width seems sensible.

So: Option 3.1: Yes, with the proviso that (1) the increase with length be substantially less than proportional (i.e., a boat 30% longer should cost much less than 30% more to moor), (2) any changes be sensitive to residents' circumstances, and (3) any large changes be made gradually.

Riverside moorings

The consultation document says that the site is unsafe and cannot feasibly be made safe. My understanding is that boats have been moored there for decades without any actual harm coming to anyone as a result of these alleged safety problems.

(However, my source of information on this is someone with a vested interest; perhaps it's incorrect?)

The consultation document lists three health and safety concerns: (1) boats are moored on the guard rail rather than to specially-created mooring points; (2) boat owners have to climb over the guard rail; (3) the guard rail is not designed to take the weight of moored boats.

Of these, it seems to me that #1 and #3 are actually a single concern; if the guard rail *were* designed to take the weight of the boats, the fact that they are moored to it would be no safety risk.

Given that boats have been moored there (tied to the guard rail) for many years and the rail is still there and, so far as I know, undamaged, it seems that whether or not it *was designed* to take the weight of moored boats it *is in fact capable* of doing so. If that's wrong, then that (rather than anything to do with how the rail was designed) is the actual safety issue; if it's right, then this isn't a safety issue at all.

The consultation document doesn't list what seems like the most obvious way to deal with an insufficiently sturdy railing used for mooring (if in fact there is one): strengthen the railing. Or the even simpler way:

note that the available evidence is that in fact the railing is perfectly fit for this purpose and accept that it isn't a safety issue.

#2, on the other hand, seems like a genuine issue; but whatever harm it causes is faced only by the people in the boats. I will make a guess: every single one of those people without exception would prefer being able to moor there and having to climb over the rail, to being unable to moor there.

That isn't necessarily a conclusive argument, of course: sometimes it genuinely is better to impose restrictions on people for their own safety. But, given that (as I understand it) this alleged problem has not in fact done anyone any harm in decades of mooring, it really doesn't seem like one of those cases.

Damage to the railings is a genuine concern; perhaps the Council could estimate the amount it has had to spend on repairs over (say) the last five years, divide by five years and the number of boats moored there, and impose a modest surcharge for mooring at Riverside to deal with it. Or -- and I think this is a better solution -- the Council could accept that some of the fixtures it is responsible for are more liable to damage than others because of where they are and how they are used, and leave it at that.

Finally: If moorings at Riverside are forbidden, then the current holders of residential mooring licences there will in effect lose their homes. The proposal to offer alternative moorings seems like the barest minimum for the Council to do. (Later in the document it transpires that the Council doesn't exactly have any alternative moorings to offer)

So: Option 4.1: no, ending moorings at Riverside seems like a really bad idea.
Option 4.2: if moorings at Riverside are ended then *obviously* at an absolutely minimum the Council should be offering alternative moorings; personally I think it should also be compensating people for having their homes forcibly moved.

(The phrasing "those boats which have registered and are regulated by the City Council and have people living aboard" strikes me as ... curiously specific. Perhaps this is just because there are other boats whose owners no reasonable person could consider entitled to such an offer; but if, as it rather sounds, it's an attempt to weasel out of extending the offer to some category (I cannot guess what) of people who would be losing their homes as a result of this change, I strongly disapprove.)

Option 4.3: if permissions to moor at Riverside are ended, it's not clear to me what difference it makes whether it is also designated a no-mooring zone. On the face of it this seems reasonable, but again I can't help suspecting something sneaky is going on here.

Option 4.4: I would like you to consider not ending mooring at Riverside; strengthening the guard rail if it really needs it; and, if (and only if) absolutely necessary, doing one or both of (a) making mooring permission at Riverside conditional on signing some sort of waiver to the effect that any harm incurred climbing over the railings is the victim's own fault and the Council can't be held responsible and/or (b) imposing a small surcharge to cover extra repair costs incurred by the Council.

Revised enforcement policy

Seems reasonable in principle. The devil, as always, is in the details.

So: Option 5.1: No objection in principle to such a policy, but without a lot more detail of what would actually be in it it's hard to tell whether it's a really good idea or a really terrible one.

Number, location, and type of moorings

I don't know enough to have an informed opinion on this, but I will say (1) that it seems hard to believe that boat moorings actually do any ecological harm, (2) that in general boats enhance rather than spoil the views, and (3) living seems like a more important activity than angling, in view of which the postulated arguments for reducing mooring berths seem unconvincing. (But as those arguments have not yet actually been made, it's hard to tell.)

So: Option 6.1: So far as I can tell, the current location, number, and types of moorings *including those at Riverside* are reasonable. Option 6.2: I'm open to persuasion but at present I see no reason why the number or total length of mooring berths should be reduced. Option 6.3: If the boats now moored at Riverside

are displaced then yes, the number of licences for mooring elsewhere must be increased to provide those people with places to live.

Winter mooring berths

I have no opinion about this; what the document says seems reasonable on the face of it.

So: Option 7.1: yes, OK.

Waiting lists

Rather than using vague terms like "for the foreseeable future", I suggest a more concrete policy along these lines: "if the existing waiting list is long enough that the people currently on it are unlikely to get licences in the next X years, then the list should remain closed".

Perhaps X might be 5 or 10.

So: Option 8.1: yes, kinda, but see above for my more specific proposal. Option 8.2: Yes, the extra spaces opened elsewhere to make up for evicting people from Riverside must go to the people evicted from Riverside rather than to others. Option 8.3: I see the logic of this but no, it's a terrible idea.

16 Sat 21/01/2017 03:52

I used to live on a narrowboat in Cambridge. I no longer live in the UK, and missed the consultation questionnaire deadline.

I hope that you will accept some emailed comments. I write in support of the boating community in Cambridge, which adds life and colour to the city. When I lived on the river, I found myself part of a thoughtful, welcoming, civic-minded and close-knit community of people. Many were making efforts to live in as sustainable a way as possible, off-grid and with minimal possessions. I hope that you will recognise that this is part of what Cambridge is - and should be - all about.

Please make it a priority to support this low-impact, vibrant community, by opposing mooring fee increases and allowing boat numbers to remain as they are.