



Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee

Scheme of Charges 2024/25

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Key Issue

To seek approval of the JMC for a scheme of charges for 2024/25 financial year.

Summary

The existing scheme of charges have been reviewed and adjustments made either in line with inflation or by considering local market forces. A new visiting boat licence charge is proposed to attract live-aboard boaters continuously cruising on other waterways in need of a winter mooring.

Officer's recommendation

That the JMC approve the scheme of charges for 2024/25 and approve the BCA officers to offer 6-month winter visitor licences for vessels registered with other waterways with immediate effect.

1 Introduction & background

- 1.1 A number of activities on the Canal, and Canal Visitor Centre are not covered by statutory rights of use and therefore command a charge. The scheme of charges has been in place for more than 30 years, subject to an annual review – this has usually been considered within the Finance Report setting the forward years' budget. A part of the BCA business plan has been to ensure that realistic market charges are made of these services, which now contribute approximately 30% of the total revenue budget – the proportion of directly generated income has grown from just 5% of budget in 2011.
- 1.2 The scheme of charges has now been updated following annual review in consultation with the Hon. Treasurer and is presented for approval by the JMC.

2 Discussion

Canal use charges

- 2.1 A revised scheme of more commercially aware navigation licensing and mooring fees was introduced in 2013, with navigation licensing being overhauled again in 2020 to reflect the possible types of boat navigating the canal. Both schemes envisaged that navigation licences and mooring charges would increase annually using the CPI index. All existing charges are therefore increased by CPI – rounded to the nearest 50p.
- 2.2 Similarly, a scheme of charging for third party events which exceed the right to wander on canal property has been in place for a number of years, with the rationale that large numbers using the

property cause additional wear and tear. These event charges are now increased in line with the CPI index.

- 2.3 *Table 1* sets out charges for use of the Canal that will increase in line with inflation and documents the change in fee from 2023/24 to the proposed 2024/25 year.

Table 1 - Canal Charges (CPI inflation)

Item	2023/2024	2024/2025
Large towpath based events - up to 50-100 participants	£56.50	£60.50
Large towpath based events - up to 101-499 participants	£116.00	£124.00
Large towpath based events - up to 500-999 participants	£232.00	£248.00
Large towpath based events - over 1000 participants	£464.50	£496.00
Undertaking searches, etc per hour (inc VAT)	£61.00	£65.00
Mooring fees - Private (per m/pa)	£92.00	£98.50
Mooring fees - Standard (per m/pa)	£159.50	£170.50
Mooring fees - Premium (per m/pa)	£183.50	£196.00
Annual lock usage fee	£122.00	£130.50
Pay As You Go lock flight - Woodham	£12.00	£13.00
Pay As You Go lock flight - St Johns	£12.00	£13.00
Pay As You Go lock flight - Deepcut & Brookwood	£24.00	£25.50
Private boat annual navigation fee - Above lock 15*	£193.00	£206.00
Private boat annual navigation fee - Below lock 15*	£96.00	£102.50
Hire boat navigation licence - annual (resident craft)*	£578.50	£618.00
Cargo boat licence - annual (resident craft)*	£482.00	£515.00
Passenger boat licence - annual per passenger place (resident craft)*	£46.50	£49.50
Workboat licence - annual (resident craft)*	£85.00	£91.00
Unpowered boat - day	£5.50	£6.00
Unpowered boat (large) - day	£8.00	£8.50
Unpowered boat - week	£16.50	£17.50
Unpowered boat (large) - week	£25.50	£27.00
Unpowered boat - annual	£45.50	£48.50
Unpowered boat (large) - annual	£68.00	£72.50
Club unpowered licence - annual	£18.00	£19.00
Hire-boat unpowered licence - day	£14.50	£15.50
Hire-boat unpowered licence - annual	£113.00	£120.50
Commercial unpowered boat - week	£63.50	£68.00
Commercial unpowered boat - fortnight	£92.50	£99.00
Commercial unpowered boat - month	£142.00	£151.50
Commercial unpowered boat - annual	£170.50	£182.00
Model boat licence - day	£5.50	£6.00
Visiting trail boats - daily use charge*	£11.50	£12.50
Visiting trail boats - registration fee	£16.50	£17.50
Visiting boat licence - week*	£51.00	£54.50
Visiting boat licence - fortnight*	£73.50	£78.50
Visiting boat licence - month*	£113.00	£120.50
Cargo boat visiting licence - week*	£127.50	£136.00
Cargo boat visiting licence - fortnight*	£184.00	£196.50

Cargo boat visiting licence - month*	£283.50	£303.00
Passenger boat visiting licence per passenger place - week*	£16.00	£17.00
Passenger boat visiting licence per passenger place - fortnight*	£23.00	£24.50
Passenger boat visiting licence per passenger place - month*	£35.50	£38.00
Workboat licence - month*	£28.50	£30.50
Houseboat transit licence - month*	£45.50	£48.50

- 2.4 A small number of Canal use charges are not set to increase and remain at the previous level these are set out in *table 2* below.

Table 2 - Canal Charges (no change)

Item	2024/2025
Large towpath based events - up to 49 participants	FREE
60% discount for charity boat operators	60%

- 2.5 The remaining charges relate to items which are neither staying the same nor rising in line with inflation.
- 2.6 A new navigation charge is proposed, building on the existing scheme of navigation – with immediate effect for the winter of 2023/24 if approved. This relates to a **6-month winter visitor licence** primarily for those craft who register craft as continuously cruising on other waterways, the existing scheme of mooring fees at the appropriate rate would then be charged in addition to the winter visitor licence.
- 2.7 The Basingstoke Canal bylaws, rules of navigation, infrastructure and planning controls do not allow for the use of the waterway by permanently residential boaters, except for the 22 moorings specifically designed for houseboats in the Surrey section of the canal. Yet elsewhere there has been a rapid growth in demand for use of boating as low-cost accommodation, especially in big cities and amongst younger generations. The lack of moorings for permanent residential use nationally mean that many such owners who use their craft for residential purposes register as “continuous cruisers” on EA or Canal & River Trust networks – moving around those networks and mooring only for short periods to comply with the terms of licensing. Whilst this is possible in summer conditions, winter floods on rivers and work programmes on canals frequently require these live-aboard boaters to moor up for longer periods in winter.
- 2.8 The BCA are mindful in the shift in focus from purely leisure use of the waterways towards more residential use, especially in London and other big cities, and now propose to offer 6-month visitor licence and mooring agreements for winter months to continuous cruiser vessels registered with other navigation authorities. The BCA office have received several enquiries as to availability of such moorings and believe that there is an untapped market for this type of mooring.
- 2.9 Such moorings would initially be offered only at the Canal Visitor Centre, Mytchett and Holland Moorings, Farnborough on existing mooring infrastructure. They will be for a maximum of 6 months to ensure there are no issues with planning consent being required for permanent residential moorings. These moorings are not fully serviced, but are close to water points and waste disposal facilities. However, as existing mooring facilities there are no issues with ecology or increased boat use.
- 2.10 It is not expected that the moorings will be fully let in the first year – however if for example 8 average length craft were to moor for 6 months the BCA may be able to generate an additional £8,600 in revenue.
- 2.11 In addition to the new 6-month winter visitor licence, the scheme of car parking charges for Reading Road car park, Fleet is set by Hart District Council under our agreement with them to manage charging at this site.

Table 3 - non-CPI charges

Item	2023/2024	2024/2025
Car park charges	As Hart DC scheme	As Hart DC scheme
Winter Mooring Navigation Fee	£140.00	£150.00

Canal Visitor Centre Charges

- 2.12 There are no Canal Visitor Centre charges set to rise with inflation in the 2024/25 year.
- 2.13 The majority of Visitor Centre charges are not set to rise in 2024/25 – this is primarily because they were reviewed last year, and comparison to other similar offers in the market would suggest that rises would not be sustainable. These are set out in *table 4* below.

Table 4 - Visitor Centre - no change

Item	2024/2025
Camping charge per person per night (under 5 yrs)	FREE
Camping - Tent 1-3 berth per night	£8.00
Camping - Tent 4-6 berth per night	£9.00
Camping - Tent 7+ berth per night	£11.00
Camping - Motorhome or caravan per night	£10.50
Camping rallies per unit per night	£11.50
Yurt hire - Peak	£70.00
Yurt hire - Off peak	£60.00
Bell Tents per night - peak	£70.00
Bell Tents per night - off peak	£60.00
Pond dipping - per hour hire	£6.00
Boat hire - pedalo per 30 minutes	£10.50
Boat hire - canadian canoe per hour	£15.00
Boat hire - canadian canoe per 1.5 hours	£22.50
Boat hire - single kayak per hour	£13.00
Boat hire - single kayak per 1.5 hours	£19.50
Boat hire - double kayak per hour	£14.00
Boat hire - double kayak per 1.5 hours	£21.00
Boat hire - rowing boat per hour	£16.00
Boat hire - rowing boat per 1.5 hours	£24.00
Public boat trips - Child (under 1 yrs) per trip	FREE
Public boat trips - Child (1-12 yrs) per trip	£4.00
Public boat trips - Adult over 13 yrs) per trip	£6.50
Public boat trips - Family (2 adults + 2 children) per trip	£20.00
Public boat trips - cream tea experience per trip to Deepcut - per person	£15.00
Public boat trips - charter hire whole boat per hour (daytime)	£60.00
Public boat trips - charter hire whole boat per hour (evening)	£70.00
Public boat trips - Hot Cross Buns experience per trip to Great Bottom Flash - per child	£6.50
Public boat trips - Hot Cross Buns experience per trip to Great Bottom Flash - per adult	£9.00

Public boat trips - Hot Cross Buns experience per trip to Deepcut - per child	£7.50
Public boat trips - Hot Cross Buns experience per trip to Deepcut - per adult	£11.50
Public boat trips - Mother's Day - per child (under 1 yrs) per trip	FREE
Public boat trips - Mother's Day - per child (1-12 yrs) per trip	£4.00
Public boat trips - Mother's Day - per adult (over 13 yrs) per trip	£6.50
Public boat trips - Mother's Day - per family (2 adults + 2 children) per trip	£20.00
Canal Centre function room - per hour - weekends etc	£15.50
Canal Centre function room - per hour - weekdays etc	£12.00
Public boat trips - Autumn Colours - Canal Centre - per child (under 1 yrs) per trip	FREE
Public boat trips - Autumn Colours - Canal Centre - per child (1-12 yrs) per trip	£4.00
Public boat trips - Autumn Colours - Canal Centre - per adult over 13 yrs) per trip	£6.50
Public boat trips - Autumn Colours - Reading Road - per child	£5.00
Public boat trips - Autumn Colours - Reading Road - per adult	£8.50
Public boat trips - Autumn Colours - Canal Centre - per family (2 adults + 2 children) per trip	£20.00
Public boat trips - One way transit between Mytchett and Fleet - per person	£12.00

2.14 A small number of Visitor Centre charges are set to rise by more than inflation – this is primarily because they were not increased last year, market forces would indicate an increase is justified and therefore have two years’ worth of inflation to be added – rounded to the nearest 50p. These are set out in *table 5* below.

Table 5 - Visitor Centre fees - non-CPI increases

Item	2024/2025	2023/2024	Justification
Camping charge per person per night (13 yrs +)	£5.00	£4.50	To match market forces & not increased for 2 years and does not exceed CPI combined for 23/24 and 24/25
Camping charge per person per night (6-12 yrs)	£3.00	£2.50	To match market forces & not increased for 2 years and does not exceed CPI combined for 23/24 and 24/25
Seasonal trails - per trail	£4.00	£3.50	Inflation (cost of prizes) and not increased for 2 years and does not exceed CPI combined for 23/24 and 24/25
Santa cruise - Band A per person	£18.50	£18.00	Inflation (cost of fuel)
Santa cruise - Band B per person	£17.50	£17.00	Inflation (cost of fuel)
Santa cruise - Band C per person	£14.50	£14.00	Inflation (cost of fuel)

3 Equalities & diversity implications

- 3.1 The majority of Canal use charges are rising in line with inflation; boating is a relatively expensive hobby and the rising costs may discourage less affluent people from owning a boat, however, this needs to be offset against rising costs for operation of the waterway.
- 3.2 Conversely the creation of a seasonal winter mooring for live-aboard boaters is likely to attract those using boating as a lower cost residential solution, this reflects the shifting use of the waterways particularly from younger working people who are struggling to enter the housing market for other reasons.
- 3.3 The majority of Visitor Services prices are not to set to rise – those that are rising will increase by less than the inflated cost since the last revision. The Visitor Services charges for recreational activity has been reviewed with the local marketplace and considered good value.

4 Crime & disorder implications

- 4.1 The inclusion of residential boat units on the moorings at the Canal Centre or Holland Moorings, may help discourage low levels of anti-social behaviour sometimes encountered, as there will be more people around to keep watch on activity. The BCA have robust terms and conditions surrounding boat use – so it is not anticipated that there should be issues with overstaying or abuse of canal property.
- 4.2 There are no other major crime and disorder implications of the charging scheme.

5 Conclusion and recommendation

- 5.1 The scheme of charges is in the main reviewed to rise by inflation or less, this reflects the additional costs of operating the Canal and Visitor Centre, whilst also keeping track of local market forces in terms of the prices of similar services.
- 5.2 The revision of the scheme of charges as set out in this report has been supported by the Hon Treasurer and have been incorporated into the 2024/25 draft budget contained in the Finance Report.
- 5.3 The Strategic Manager recommends that:
- That the JMC approve the scheme of charges for 2024/25 and approve the BCA officers to offer 6-month winter visitor licences for vessels registered with other waterways with immediate effect.