



Welfare Guidance

The Canal & River Trust is a Waterways and Wellbeing charity, We're the charity who look after and bring to life 2,000 miles of waterways, because we believe that life is better by water.

As a Trust for the Waterways and Wellbeing, we will broaden our impact to achieve our vision and by caring for our waterways, and promoting their use, we can improve the wellbeing of our nation.

This Welfare Guidance forms an integral part of our overall strategy of making life better by water and promotes our caring values. This guidance explains our signposting support service for staff or volunteers who have a concern about the welfare of our boating customers on the Trust's waterways.

The Welfare Guidance will help our customers make informed choices about the type of support they require and will help to ensure that we signpost to the most appropriate partners who can provide support services.

This Guidance is set in the context of the Trust's Equality Policy which sets out our commitment to promote equality for people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act policy can be found here:

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/original/34378-equality-act-reasonable-adjustment-policy.pdf?v=db65fc>

We will:

- Help customers identify and take advantage of the support available from local authorities, who have a duty of care to provide adequate services (Housing, Social Services, benefit advice etc), and/or other support agencies.
- Help colleagues identify where customers and in particular boaters may be vulnerable and where support may prevent the need for enforcement action against boaters. Boat removal is a last resort, only undertaken when all other avenues have been exhausted.
- Allow colleagues to work in conjunction with nominated advocates where customers would like us to liaise with someone else on their behalf, once the appropriate permissions and authority disclosures have been obtained.

We will work with appropriate organisations to develop the signposting options available to boaters. These organisations will depend on the type of support required. Links to statutory and voluntary agencies will be developed and where appropriate we will challenge relevant organisations who have a statutory obligation to provide assistance.

This guidance will help support vulnerable customers and boaters, but it can also help to reduce the financial costs incurred as a result of license evasion, enforcement action, court procedures, boat removals and reputational impact of these issues.

Applicable date:

September 2020 reviewed every 24 months by the Welfare Officer or relevant Head of Service.

Applicable to:

All Canal & River Trust colleagues, including employed staff and volunteers who come into contact with vulnerable customers and vulnerable boaters.

Responsibility:

The Head of Customer Service Support is responsible for implementing the arrangements including distribution of this guidance. The Welfare Officer is responsible for periodically reviewing the document to ensure its on-going relevance and accuracy.

Authorised by: Jon Horsfall - Head of Customer Service Support

Date:

Custodian: Sean Williams – Welfare Officer

Review record:

Issue	Date	Change
3	1st January 2021	

The Guidance

The Welfare Guidance applies to:

- 1.) Canal & River Trust (referred to throughout this document as “the Trust”) colleagues who may come into contact with vulnerable customers with specific reference to vulnerable boaters. We include both our employed staff and volunteers in our reference to colleagues.
- 2.) Our customers, particularly Boaters licenced to navigate on those canals and rivers that we care for and who have been identified as vulnerable. We may, at our discretion, extend the support to the family members of those boaters if the actions of the family member have a direct effect on the boater in need.
- 3.) Any person working with or for the Trust who has a concern about the welfare of our customers on the Trust’s waterways.

What is a Vulnerable Boater?

“Boaters may be vulnerable in different ways, for example due to disability, age, illness or financial circumstances, and for short or long periods. Other factors can lead to people becoming vulnerable, such as not being fit for work, domestic abuse, neglect, learning difficulties or mental health needs not being met.

Referral criteria

Any boater who may be vulnerable can be referred for advice and/or signposted to support by colleagues and volunteers. Self-referral, either from the boater or a referral from someone else, for example a friend or a member of their family, will also be accepted, providing relevant consent has been provided.

Typical trigger criteria that may lead to a referral are as follows (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Self-Referral.
- A complaint or concern raised by others.
- Non-Compliance with Terms and Conditions.
- Behaviour causing the Trust a concern where the boater could cause a risk or harm to themselves or others.

After a referral is made:

For those with a support need we may, at our discretion, offer the following services (this is not an exhaustive list)

- Flexible payment options.
- Working with other Canal & River Trust teams to consider signposting options.
- Permitted overstays (which we might refer to as “Authorised Extended Stays” or “AES”) on medical and other appropriate grounds.

- Putting boaters in touch with nationally recognised boating organisations.
- Reasonable adjustments for boaters with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

We have a specific process for making reasonable adjustments to our normal cruising requirements for disabled boaters, further information can be found within our Equalities Policy for Customer Service Delivery.

When a possible need for an adjustment has been identified we request that an Equalities Questionnaire is completed. This will help us to fully understand the boater's situation so the most appropriate reasonable adjustment can be agreed, the questionnaire is linked below.

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/original/35483-equalities-questionnaire.pdf?v=470fd9>

The above services may not be offered if:

- There are no vulnerabilities or support needs that have been identified.
- There is non-engagement with Trust colleagues or other supporting agencies or a refusal of signposting support.
- There is a breach of the terms and conditions of the license which is not related to any vulnerabilities.

Signposting options:

The Trust has a dedicated webpage that contains up to date advice and this can be accessed here:

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/boating/licensing-your-boat/boat-licence-customer-support-team/do-you-know-a-vulnerable-boater>

Additionally, we can offer:

- Signposting to external agencies for example:
 - a. Citizens Advice, Local Authority, Turn2us, Shelter, Turning Point, Age UK, Money Advice Trust, Salvation Army, NHS, Local GP, Samaritans, Step Change, DWP or local Job Centre and any local support network we are aware of.
 - b. Waterways Chaplaincy
 - c. The Welfare Officer can also act as a point of reference.

List of organisations found in Appendix 1

A note about Waterways Chaplains

We have a working relationship with the Waterways Chaplains (through the independent charity Workplace Matters) who support a number of our customers nationally across our waterways.

The Chaplaincy have lots of experienced chaplains that are available to help or offer guidance for the well-being of everyone connected with the waterways regardless of their religious faith or cultural background.

For more information on the Waterway Chaplains please click on the following links

www.waterwayschaplaincy.org.uk

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/blogs/waterfront/my-role-waterways-chaplain>

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/london-and-south-east/waterway-chaplaincy>

Safeguarding Concerns

We believe that no child, young person or adult at risk should ever experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote their welfare and to keep them safe. We are committed to providing safe environments and working practises that promote and protect the safety and welfare of children, young people and adults at risk at all times.

All Trust colleagues are required to complete the E-Learning "introduction to Safeguarding" training, with specific colleagues receiving face to face Safeguarding training. Colleagues are required to complete refresher training and all staff will have mandatory Safeguarding E-Learning modules to complete, the contents of which remain available for future reference. Further training must be completed as and when it is required. In addition, staff can access Trust-Ed vulnerable customers E-Learning modules.

The Trust has a "Safeguarding Children Young People and Adults at Risk" policy statement available on our website. Safeguarding concerns should be raised to the Designated Safeguarding Officer - details are available on Gateway for colleagues and also on our externally facing website.

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/original/35777-safeguarding-position-statement.pdf?v=7be916>

Monitoring and Reviews.

We routinely review enforcement cases where our customer lives aboard their boat ("live-aboard" cases) where there is the potential for a boat to be removed from our waterways.

We monitor the live-aboard process to ensure that when a vulnerability has been identified we explore the signposting options available and provide this information to the customer. We regularly review reasonable adjustment requests to ensure consistency and that the adjustments are appropriate.

End Document

APPENDIX

Appendix 1

If you are in financial difficulty or need advice to help you work out how you might pay a debt, contact a debt advisor. The following organisations offer free, impartial, and non-judgemental advice:

Organisations	Telephone number	Web/ Email Address
Citizens Advice	03444 111 444 (England) 03444 772 020 (Wales)	www.citizensadvice.org.uk
Civil Legal Advice	0345 345 4345	www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice
StepChange Debt Charity	0800 138 1111 (Freephone)	www.stepchange.org
National Debtline	0808 808 4000 (Freephone)	www.nationaldebtline.org
AdviceUK	0300 777 0107	www.adviceuk.org.uk
Christians Against Poverty	0800 328 0006 (Freephone)	www.capuk.org
Debt Advice Foundation	FREEPHONE 0800 043 40 50	www.debtadvicefoundation.org

You can check if you are entitled to claim benefits by visiting the following websites:

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/> or <https://www.entitledto.co.uk/>

Turn 2 us has a 'Find an Adviser' search engine which allows you to search for sources of information and advice on benefits, housing, jobs, legal issues and other practical help and contains details of local, regional and national organisations in all areas of the UK

<https://advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk>

If you are **homeless** or **facing homelessness** you should contact your local authority to discuss your options and seek independent advice. You can find your local authority here:

www.gov.uk/find-local-council or you can call a local directory enquiry service for local authority.

Should you need **any further help or advice** here are some other independent organisations that offer a free of charge service

Waterways Chaplain (Senior Chaplain - Mark Chester)	01727 818144	Waterways@workplacematters.org.uk
Shelter	0808 800 4444	www.shelter.org.uk
Samaritans	08457 909090	www.samaritans.org.uk
Salvation Army	0207 3674500	www.salvationarmy.org.uk
Citizens Advice Bureau	03444 111 444	www.citizensadvice.org.uk
The Money Advice Service	0300 500 5000	www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk
Christians Against Poverty	01274 760720	https://capuk.org
Age UK	0800 169 6565	www.ageuk.org.uk
Gov UK	Website only	www.gov.uk
Civil Legal Advice	0345 345 4345	www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice
NHS - non emergency	111	(Note: for emergency use 999)