

## PRESS RELEASE



*For immediate release*

**Date:** 12 February 2024

### **Fund Britain's Waterways (FBW) to provide members the opportunity to quiz Navigation Authorities**

FBW was launched at the end of June 2023 in response to the inadequate funding and deteriorating state of Britain's network of canals and navigable rivers. Despite the widespread appreciation of the value of this unique and well-loved national asset and the benefits it delivers, the Government appears intent on significantly reducing its funding. Through FBW, more than 110 organisations are campaigning together for national and local government to act now and protect the public benefit and natural capital of our waterways.

FBW's activities to date have focused on raising awareness of the challenges facing our canals and rivers and the message that increased and sustainable funding is needed. Three well-reported Campaign Cruises were held in 2023 in Birmingham, Gloucester and past the Palace of Westminster on the Thames. In 2024, there will be a weekend of action over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend (4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024). This will comprise a series of events across the country on waterways managed by different inland navigation authorities, in addition to IWA's annual Canalway Cavalcade at Little Venice in London. It will culminate in a second Campaign Cruise past the Houses of Parliament on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May, when Parliamentarians will be invited to view the event and express their support for the continued maintenance of the waterways.

At the same time as campaigning for increased funding for navigation authorities, FBW recognises the importance of those navigation authorities being able to explain how they are making the best possible use of funds for the waterways. FBW will therefore be holding sessions with major navigation authorities, starting with the Canal & River Trust on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

The sessions will be chaired by FBW and live streamed to FBW members, with a recording and written notes of the meeting to be made publicly available at a later date. FBW members are invited to submit detailed written questions, which will be collated and submitted to each navigation authority two weeks in advance of its

meeting. FBW will then ask the questions in the meeting and the navigation authority will provide detailed answers, both in person in the meeting and also in writing.

**Les Etheridge, Chair of FBW, said: “By arranging these sessions we are enabling FBW members to ask questions on any area including those where reservations are publicly expressed. These will be positive and constructive sessions which we hope will benefit both the navigation authority and FBW.”**

**About [Fund Britain’s Waterways](#) (FBW):**

FBW brings together a wide range of organisations with the sole purpose of campaigning collectively for an increase in government funding of Britain’s inland waterways to avert their decline, and to promote awareness of the huge economic, environmental and social well-being value they provide. Established in June 2023, it already has over 110 members representing hundreds of thousands of users and supporters of inland waterways.

**Contact:**

For further information about Fund Britain’s Waterways, or to submit a question for the Canal & River Trust session (by 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024), contact [info@fundbritainswaterways.org.uk](mailto:info@fundbritainswaterways.org.uk)