IWA Policy on Moorings on Navigable Waterways

Vision: IWA's vision is for a vibrant inland waterways system where every boater who wishes to have a permanent mooring can find and afford one, and where all boaters can find suitable moorings while travelling around the waterways.

This policy statement sets out IWA's views on the achievement of the above vision, through the provision of visitor (non-permanent) and permanent moorings along the inland waterways and the facilities and services at all suitable locations.

This policy was originally developed in the context of an increasing number of leisure craft appearing on the waterways system with resultant localised congestion. More recently, the way in which inland waterways are used has been changing, with residential boating becoming increasingly popular.

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Key Policy Statements

Our Key Policy Statements on Moorings are listed below. These Key Statements can also be found in the main body of this document with more detail, as well as additional supporting Policy Statements which are all highlighted in bold text.

- IWA supports a general mix of visitor moorings; the number and type being determined by the nature and popularity of the location.
- Short-stay mooring limits should be reviewed periodically and only maintained where shown to be necessary.
- Charges for overstaying (for instance £25 per day after 48 hours) should only be shown if the Navigation Authority has a mechanism in place to implement them.
- Provision should be made at waterside businesses for short stay visits with limited time only, sufficient for a boat to pick up supplies and then leave.
- Boats should be able to moor where it is practical to do so, and where that does not obstruct navigation by other craft or the operation of the waterway. Any deviation from this should be made clear with visible signage.
- IWA supports the practice of providing and charging for temporary winter moorings for craft without a permanent home mooring.
- IWA supports the principle of people living afloat and will promote and campaign for the provision of more affordable moorings for residential use.
- IWA will campaign for new waterside developments to include plans for residential moorings where appropriate.
- IWA recommends and supports the provision of permanent moorings off the navigational line of the waterway (‘off-line') using basins, marinas or lay-bys with facilities ranging from basic to comprehensive to meet a variety of boaters’ needs.
- IWA considers that there is great demand for smaller, more modest, off-line mooring basins with basic facilities and will encourage this type of facility.
- The focus should be to provide off-line mooring facilities and so reduce the number of permanent moorings on the navigational line of the waterway (‘on-line’), particularly in areas of high boat density.
- The designed width of the waterway must be considered with two abreast moorings only allowed when the waterway is wide enough.
- For those on-line permanent moorings located near popular sites, the visitor moorings must take preference near to the point of access.
- All mooring providers should ensure a safe environment for access to vessels.
- Consideration should be given to the use of sustainable energy sources to provide power for mooring facilities.

1 Introduction

Vision: IWA's vision is for a vibrant inland waterways system where every boater who wishes to have a permanent mooring can find and afford one, and where all boaters can find suitable moorings while travelling around the waterways.

1.1 This policy statement sets out IWA's views on the achievement of the above Vision, through the provision of visitor (non-permanent) and permanent moorings along the inland waterways and the facilities and services at all suitable locations.

1.2 This policy was originally developed in the context of an increasing number of leisure craft appearing on the waterways system with resultant localised congestion. More recently, the way in which inland waterways are used has been changing, with residential boating becoming increasingly popular, especially in areas with high housing costs. Visual impact and shortage of permanent and visitor moorings is becoming apparent on some parts of the waterway system. It is important for there to be an effective mix of mooring provision with a pricing structure reflecting the provision of facilities which is also 'affordable' dependant on the boater's needs.

For the purpose of this document, the following terms are used to describe specific types of mooring:

- **Utility mooring:** a mooring provided to ensure safe navigation, e.g. lock/bridge landings, moorings for water, sewage or rubbish disposal, or flood relief lay-bys.
- **Visitor (short-stay) mooring:** a site allowing mooring for a specified time, e.g. 2 hours, 24 hours, 48 hours, 7 days, etc. On waterways managed by the Canal & River Trust (CRT) or Scottish Canals the navigation default (unless restricted by signage) is to allow short-term mooring for up to 14 days at one time.
- **Permanent (long-stay) mooring:** a site allowing a boat to be kept at a specified place for longer periods than the default (on CRT waterways, for longer than 14 days) for leisure, residential or commercial purposes. These can be either:
- **Off-line mooring:** any mooring off the through navigational line of the waterway. e.g. marinas, mooring basins, lay-bys, etc.
- **On-line mooring:** any mooring on the through navigational line of the waterway, on either the towpath or non–towpath side.

All policy statements are highlighted in **bold text** in the main body of this document.

2. Utility Moorings

2.1 On canals and rivers, utility moorings in the vicinity of locks, moveable bridges and services must only be used for stopping to operate or use these facilities. Such access landings are to be exclusively reserved for this purpose and not used for longer mooring periods (refer to IWA's policy on "Operability of locks and moveable bridges"). There should be zero tolerance to abuse of these moorings by any boater including Navigation Authority working vessels that are not immediately involved with work on the asset.

2.2 On river navigations, IWA recognises that lock cuts are suitable places for overnight mooring outside lock operating times, and in this case suitable signage must be provided.

2.3 Adequate utility provision should be made for safe haven moorings to be used in the event of river flood conditions. If safe to do so, then Utility moorings should be made available where other moorings become flooded.

3.Visitor (Short-Stay) Moorings

3.1 Although 'off-line moorings' sometimes cater for visiting boats, this section is primarily concerned with boats mooring to the bank of the waterway for a limited period normally designated by the landowner.

3.2 In general, Navigation Authorities usually have the right to establish permanent or temporary non-residential linear moorings on waterways where they are riparian landowner. However, on many rivers and some canals the landowner is different from the Navigation Authority and can ask for a charge to moor against their land. Typically, the amount is shown by way of a sign, and the charge is collected daily.

3.3 IWA supports a general mix of visitor moorings, the number and type being determined by the nature and popularity of the location. More details may be found in the IWA Policy on Residential Boating.

- **Short-stay mooring time-limits should be reviewed periodically and only maintained where shown to be necessary, for instance because of high demand.** Navigation Authorities may stipulate a maximum time-period for short-stay visitor moorings, for example 2, 24, 48 hours, 7 days. If not necessary, the default mooring period should be reinstated and enforced. Where time-limits are applied then signage should be checked on a regular basis and repaired or re-instated if damaged or missing.
- **Navigation Authorities should enforce and charge penalties, where posted, for boats that overstay the stipulated time periods or moor where they should not.** We recognise that that Navigation Authorities may struggle to check all moorings and enforce time periods, but without adherence by boaters the time periods only become a guideline, and legitimate boaters will be affected.
- **Charges for overstaying (for instance £25 per day after 48 hours) should only be shown if the Navigation Authority has a mechanism in place to implement them.** We recognise that signage may be used as a deterrent even if not enforced, but where there is no enforcement boaters will quickly learn that the overstay has no penalty. Signage without enforcement will become pointless.
- **Navigation Authorities should enforce, and move as required, where they are legally allowed to, unlicenced / unregistered boats left in Short-Stay**

moorings. Apparently abandoned boats should not restrict or reduce the number of moorings potentially available to legitimate boats.

- **Navigation Authorities should not utilise publicly available Short-Stay moorings for the Authorities own, or contracted, workboats.** Workboats should be moored in their own designated areas, or away from Short-Stay moorings unless the navigation authority is working on the short-stay themselves.
- **Mooring restrictions should be relaxed and not enforced when adverse weather, or adverse water flow, would make boat movements unsafe.** Boats should not be forced to move where safety of the boat or crew may be jeopardised.
- **IWA supports the practice of extending the time limit of time restricted moorings during winter months.** During the winter months when the waterways are much less busy, and when stoppages may impact cruising then it is practical and prudent to extend the time limits on short-stay moorings.
- **Provision should be made at appropriate waterside businesses for short stay visits with limited time only, sufficient for a boat to pick up supplies and then move off.**
- **Boats may moor where it is practical to do so, and where that does not obstruct navigation by other craft or the operation of the waterway. Any deviation from this at any point on the waterway should be made clear with visible signage.** Other than at moorings with designated time limits, mooring can take place anywhere on a waterway managed by CRT or Scottish Canals for up to 14 days at one time. In some busy locations this 14-day rule applies to an annual period, i.e. 14 days in one calendar year, in which instance a sign must be in place. This does not imply that navigation authorities are obliged to make all of their towpaths suitable to accept mooring, for instance in construction and water depth, as this has never been the case.
- **In busy popular areas where there are many permanent, and residential moorings the Navigation Authority should provide short-stay visitor moorings.** This is to ensure that boats are still able to visit popular areas such as city centres.
- **IWA does not support Navigation Authorities making charges for short-term visitor moorings.** In situations where moorings are at a great premium, it will consider supporting charges for visitor moorings which can be reserved, or where there are additional services provided, such as electric hook-up points.
- **IWA welcomes off-line security-serviced short-term visitor moorings in locations where person or property may be considered at risk.** At such sites access for emergency services must be maintained and keys or lock combinations provided to boaters for the duration of their stay.
- **IWA will not support and will resist any charges being made to boaters for security-serviced moorings at any on-line location.**

3.4 IWA supports the designation of appropriate mooring space for registered trip boat operators, with appropriate signage provided. Dedicated moorings for trip boats provides a known base for commercial and charity run boats.

3.5 IWA supports the practice of mooring providers reserving visitor mooring space for organised waterways festivals and events. 14 days' notice should be given, and suitable signage should be erected prior to the event.

4. Permanent (Long-Stay) Moorings

4.1 Winter Moorings

4.1.1 IWA supports the practice of providing and charging for temporary winter moorings for craft without a permanent home mooring. With the caveat that such moorings will be monitored to assure that the facility is not misused and demand for visitor moorings at the designated site is not compromised.

4.2 Residential Moorings

4.2.1 IWA supports the principle of people living afloat and will promote and campaign for the provision of more affordable moorings for residential use on all waterways, including waterways under restoration. More details can be found in the IWA Policy on Residential Boating. IWA's approach in areas of high residential demand is illustrated in IWA's Vision for London.

4.2.2 IWA will campaign for new waterside developments to include plans for residential moorings where appropriate.

Specifically:

- Where IWA Branches are responding to consultations on Local Plans, they should encourage consideration of the needs of live-aboard boaters, and the provision of a proportion of residential moorings in new and existing marinas, and other appropriate waterside developments.
- If planning applications are submitted for new marinas or other moorings in their area and provided this is considered desirable, Branches should refer to the benefits of including residential moorings in their submissions.
- Developers of residential housing sites alongside waterways will be encouraged to incorporate moorings – both residential and leisure, and ideally off-line, into their designs. It should be made clear by developers that any residential and leisure moorings are part of the development to avoid future conflict between residents and boaters.

4.2.3 All permanent mooring sites (both on-line and off-line) should ideally include provision for an appropriate number of residential boats. This helps to ensure security at the mooring site and of the boats and other assets kept there. IWA also recognises that there is a shortage of residential moorings which this would help alleviate. It is important to formalise the number of residential moorings. The provision of residential moorings will largely be subject to planning permission from the local authority as to whether this is allowable or not.

4.2.4 Mains 230-volt AC electricity is desirable for moorings to reduce the reliance on using engines and generators to provide power when moored. The location and security of residential berths should also be considered (e.g. access to pontoons, general layout and alarm technology). Where 230 volt AC electricity is not available then permanent moorings with extensive tree cover should be avoided to allow solar panels to work efficiently.

4.3 Off-Line Moorings

4.3.1 IWA recommends and supports the provision of off-line permanent moorings using basins, marinas or lay-bys with facilities ranging from basic to comprehensive to meet a variety of boaters' needs. The aim should normally be to reduce on-line moorings by the creation of new moorings off-line. We encourage any new developments to incorporate off-line moorings in the design. This may be more viable for housing developers than originally thought, as a mooring basin could be acceptable to the Local Planning Authority as part of its open space requirement and might well increase the sale value of houses there. As part of the design and marketing it should be made clear that boat moorings are an integral part of the development to ensure that boaters are also seen as neighbours.

4.3.2 IWA will normally be in favour of new off-line moorings in appropriate locations. In certain circumstances IWA may object to new off-line moorings where there will be an impact on the waterway such as an expected increase in congestion. IWA Branches, along with other parts of IWA and other relevant organisations, are encouraged to consider carefully whether to support any new proposal or planning application for new off-line permanent moorings.

4.3.3 In any area or stretch of waterway there should be a range of off-line mooring basins available, from small sites with minimal facilities, to medium and larger sites where more enhanced facilities are provided.

4.3.4 IWA considers that there is great demand for smaller, more modest, off-line mooring basins with basic facilities. These could be run on a partnership basis (e.g. by a boat club or small group of private boaters) allowing for more social inclusion than the bigger more commercial operations. Navigation Authorities should be lobbied to consider updating their charging policies to allow for more socio-economic diversity. Examples of such developments would be a small off-line basin in a farmer's field or the widening of the waterway on the non–towpath side with an inset to allow herringbone–style mooring for a small number of boats arranged in such a way that it does not obstruct the navigable width of the waterway.

4.3.5 IWA supports the retention and use of existing arms, wharfs and basins as off-line permanent moorings where this does not prevent any current use as winding points. The inclusion of permanent moorings as part of a restoration plan can significantly add to the regeneration benefits of the waterway.

4.3.6 The construction of off-line moorings should conform to IWA policy on Standards for Construction, Restoration and Maintenance of Inland Waterways. Where off-line moorings are created requiring access via the towpath side of a waterway, the bridge carrying the towpath over the entrance canal should conform to IWA's policy on Towpaths.

4.3.7 Off-line moorings for new business bases should not adversely affect existing canal traffic. Provision for a hire boat base and/or shared ownership base at a new or existing site should be considered as a separate issue. Careful consideration by the local IWA Branch is encouraged with an assessment of likely impact of significantly increased boat and vehicle movements compared with a mooring site accommodating only privately owned craft.

4.3.8 Where possible restoration projects should promote the provision of off-line moorings to avoid the establishment of (official or unofficial) on-line moorings that may impede navigation or have a detrimental effect on the project's relationship with the public.

4.4 On-line Moorings

4.4.1 There should be a focus to provide off-line moorings in preference to on-line moorings. IWA is concerned about congestion that takes place, particularly in areas of high boat movement. IWA accepts the fact that there are many on-line permanent moorings on the waterways that have been established over a number of years. As ever-increasing numbers of boats come onto the system, we welcome the focus to provide off-line mooring facilities and so reduce the number of on-line permanent moorings particularly in areas of high boat density. Such moorings are often a source of conflict where boats pass at inappropriate speed or boats are not moored in accordance with best practice.

4.4.2 Where on-line permanent moorings cannot be avoided, they should, wherever possible, be located on the non-towpath side of the waterway, which traditionally would be privately owned. We recognise that there are cases that access to the offside may not be possible or practical. We also recognise that there are many historic on-line moorings already in place where it is not practical or possible to relocate.

4.4.3 IWA is opposed to exceptionally lengthy on-line permanent moorings as they contribute to congestion, with navigating past such moorings often seen as tedious and a source of conflict. Whilst moored boats are considered part of the waterway scene, holding a steady course past moored boats at a low speed is often difficult and may reduce control of steering, particularly in high winds. Navigation Authorities should address this problem with the landowner. A series of shorter lengths appropriately placed is considered better than one extensive continuous length. On very wide waterways then the reduction in speed may be unnecessary so lengthy on-line moorings may be less of an issue.

4.4.4 Where on-line permanent moorings cannot be avoided the location of the moorings should be taken into consideration. Possible hazards may include, being too close to a bend or junction, impeding the navigation of other craft, on the outside of bends, or double mooring when the waterway is of a restricted width.

4.4.5 The designed width of the waterway must be considered with two abreast moorings only allowed when the waterway is wide enough. There should always be room for two moving boats of appropriate width for the waterway, to pass comfortably.

4.4.6 For those on-line permanent moorings located near popular "Honey Pot" sites, the visitor moorings must take preference near to the point of access. Navigation Authorities should re-designate existing situations in such circumstances.

4.4.7 Wherever possible restoration projects should avoid the provision of on-line moorings. It is recognised that land for off-line moorings just may not be available. If on-line moorings are necessary to make the restoration scheme viable, they should be limited to the non–towpath side lay-by type. In these instances, the project will need to consider the need to provide basic services (water, sewage disposal etc.), land ownership, car parking provision and the effect thereof on the local population.

5.Facilities

5.1 All mooring providers should ensure a safe environment for access to vessels. Sites designated as Utility, Visitor or Permanent moorings should have a hard edge and an adequate depth of water maintained. There must be appropriate rings, bollards, cleats, slip rails or the like, of adequate size for the vessels using the navigation. These should be spaced so as to enable varying lengths of craft to adopt best mooring practice in such a way as to prevent linear movement (a spacing of 3 metres between rings or bollards is recommended). Boaters should be encouraged to moor efficiently, sharing rings and mooring close to the next boat in busy moorings etc. to enable as many moorings as possible to be available. Timber, plastic or other fendering should be installed so as to prevent any overhang which could cause damage to low–freeboard craft. This is particularly important on lock and moveable bridge landings. It is recognised that on some waterways that short or multiple jetties or pontoons may be necessary rather than having a continuous mooring.

5.2 All access points on to the site, and any facilities provided on the site, must meet current Health & Safety legislation and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. IWA draws attention to the duty of care placed on all parties involved in provision of moorings, including landowners. Care should be taken to ensure that non-slip surfaces should be provided where surfaces may be wet or frozen. Moorings should provide disabled access wherever possible.

5.3 All permanent or visitor moorings situated on waterways subject to tides, or to regular flooding that takes the water level above that normally expected, should be provided with moorings that allow for the rise and fall of the water level. This may be achieved by floating pontoons, or sliding slip rails, which should be arranged to be accessible for the full range of sizes of vessel using the waterway.

5.4 It is desirable that all existing and new permanent mooring sites be provided with minimum facilities as specified below. Moorers would expect to pay charges reflecting an accepted fair market value based on the facilities provided and their location in relation to the moorings. Moorings should be offered at reduced rates in the underused parts of the system, with the aim of spreading boat movements, reducing congestion and increasing socio-economic diversity.

- **Small Sites.** (up to 10 boats). These should provide rubbish disposal, and a fresh water tap with a reasonable flow of potable drinking water. Toilet waste disposal facilities and mains electricity should be provided where practicable. At very small sites it is noted that it may not be practicable for these facilities to be provided and still keep the cost of the moorings low. The very smallest basic mooring sites, therefore, may have minimal facilities with the provision of any of the above facilities being subject to the practicalities of the site and the willingness of the landowner to provide them.

- **Medium Sites.** (10-100 boats). These should provide rubbish disposal skips, sufficient car parking or good access to public transport, and multiple fresh water taps with a reasonable flow of potable drinking water. Toilet waste disposal facilities and mains electricity should be provided and where practicable pump out and showers.

- **Large sites.** (100+ boats). These should provide rubbish disposal skips, sufficient car parking and multiple freshwater taps (all with a reasonable flow of potable drinking water), toilet waste disposal facilities, mains electricity, pump out and showers. Water and electricity supplies to each mooring position should be considered. If possible, the site should be provided with some means of taking a boat out of the water for repairs (e.g. a dry dock, slipping facilities or a crane), with a covered area for undertaking weather–sensitive work such as painting. Disposal facilities for oily waste should also be provided, with fuel sales, chandlery and perhaps painting and maintenance services (including DIY facilities).

5.5 In the case of Medium & Large permanent mooring sites, a slipway suitable for launching trailable boats is desirable. [Note: The word "slipway" can refer either to small slipways, suitable for launching a trailable boat (e.g. with a 1 in 4 slope) or to larger slipways with a mechanism for pulling a larger boat out of the water for maintenance (which typically are wider and longer and have something like a 1 in 8 slope). In the context of this document "slipway" refers to that for launching/pulling out trailable boats, whilst "slipping facilities" refers to that used for carrying out maintenance on boats.]

5.6 Consideration should be given to the use of sustainable energy sources to provide power for mooring facilities. For example, wind or solar power could be utilised for service blocks, particularly if mains services are not available.

5.7 Sustainable rubbish disposal should be provided where possible, or where required by law. Sustainable rubbish disposal should also be considered, even at small sites, with recycling facilities provided where possible, or where required by law.

5.8 All permanent mooring sites should be located close to the public transport network, or should have sufficient designated car parking, or ideally both. Suitable pedestrian access and facilities should be provided for people travelling on foot, bicycle or public transport. Mooring sites should not rely on car parking on adjacent roads that may cause damage to verges or cause inconvenience to other properties.

6. Guidance for Campaigning

6.1 IWA Branches, along with other parts of IWA and other relevant organisations, are encouraged to monitor local authorities' long term planning documentation (e.g. Local Development Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents) to encourage adoption of IWA policy for any potential future mooring facilities when such documents are out for consultation.

6.2 When responding to specific planning applications for new off-line moorings, IWA Branches are encouraged to suggest the inclusion of the relevant range of facilities as outlined in this Policy, if they are not already included in the proposal.

6.3 When considering planning applications for new off-line moorings, IWA Branches may wish to consider the following issues:

- existing boat movements in the area
- existing mooring density in the area
- impact on the natural environment
- impact on local infrastructure
- impact on the landscape and heritage assets

- opportunities to reduce congestion by operational improvements

6.4 IWA Branches are encouraged to monitor all moorings sites in their area and keep abreast of proposals for new mooring developments to ensure that they are fit for purpose and are located in such places that they meet IWA policy guidelines.

7.Further Information

This policy document should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- IWA Policy on Operability of Locks and Moveable Bridges
- IWA Policy on Residential Boating
- IWA Policy on Standards for Construction, Restoration and Maintenance of Inland Waterways
- IWA Towpaths Policy
- IWA's Vision for London

Glossary

- **Boat movements:** the number of boats navigating through a given location.
- **Congestion:** too many boats on a stretch of waterway causing disruption to navigation.
- **Honey pot:** location on the waterway that proves very popular with boaters wanting to moor.
- **Inappropriate speed:** The speed of a boat such that it may cause annoyance and possible damage to others.
- **Mooring density:** The number of permanent moored boats at a location.
- **Navigation Authority:** managing body responsible for a designated waterway.
- **Residential mooring:** A boat moored that provides a permanent home for the owner.
- **Serviced Sites:** Mooring sites with specific facilities ranging from security locks to electricity, drinking water and waste disposal etc.