

Deployment of regular enforcement patrol from Bathampton to Bradford upon Avon: draft proposals for a pilot project in summer 2010

Background

This proposal arises from discussion with (a) representatives of BANES District Council, whose constituents have expressed unhappiness about the establishment of a residential boating community along the canal within the district, and (b) representative of the boating community who reject allegations that they create a nuisance in the neighbourhood or are in breach of boat licence conditions by remaining in the area without a home mooring. The latter group have challenged British Waterways and the local authority to make use of their established enforcement powers to deal with any problems and BANES has formally requested BW to increase enforcement activity through its district.

Aims of the pilot project

1. To reassure holiday boaters that they will not have difficulty mooring for short visits to villages along the route into Bath from the east.
2. To reduce complaints from neighbours about noise, nuisance and environmental pollution by using more systematic and focussed enforcement
3. To increase the flow of data on boat sightings and boat stay times on visitor and casual moorings
4. To resume application of overstay charges using additional data obtained in 3 where signing is already in situ.

Method

Deployment by BANES Enforcement Department (insert correct name) of uniformed patrol along the stretch for 5 days a week between xx May and xx August. 2010.

The stretch covered would be from Br.xxx (Bathampton, precise location) to Br. yy (Bradford upon Avon precise location). This is a total distance of approx 17kms, and assuming that the officer walked, rather than cycled (could this be an option?), we estimate that each section would be covered on alternate working days. Timing should be varied so that people would not be able to predict the arrival time of the officer each day.

Brief for the enforcement officer

1. Gather evidence of any breaches in public health / environmental / other relevant laws – or as per normal practice for patrolling parks and other public places in the district
2. Gather evidence of any breaches in BW bylaws or boat licence terms and conditions (BW will supply clear schedule of these).
3. Record evidence of cruising leisure boats not being able to moor at designated visitor moorings.
4. Record index numbers of all boats moored within each kilometre length (using BW's normal sighting schedule – discuss whether the officer should use a BW handheld computer/BANES technology (providing data entry system compatible (unlikely?), or use pen and paper or voice recorder.
5. Obtain witness statements where appropriate and feasible.

(Evidence to include photographs as appropriate)

Resourcing and responsibilities

BANES has indicated provisional agreement to manage the employment and supervision of the officer within their enforcement department and to cover at least part of the costs. BW is seeking similar support from Wiltshire CC: it is important that the pilot covers the whole distance to BoA in order to avoid eastward migration of problems. Of the total 17k length, approximately 12k is within the BANES boundary. We would hope that there would be no obstacle to a BANES officer patrolling within the Wilts unitary authority area. Ideally costs should be shared pro rata to distance.

The officer would be operating on BW property with the consent of BW.

Monitoring

Ideally we would have baseline estimates of the following and put in place a means of estimating changes over the course of the pilot. In practice this may be impossible, but we need to discuss alternative basic measures.

1. Tourist spend in villages by boaters
2. Actual incidents of nuisance etc clearly attributable to residential boaters (nb – we should be encouraging neighbours to submit visitor incident reports via [BW's website](#))
3. Feedback from hire boat and marina/mooring operators – should we supply short pro forma questionnaires which they'd hand out to customers?