



ATKINS

B&NES Water Space Study

Boaters Survey Consultation Report
Bath and North East Somerset Council

14 November 2016

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Notice

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Introduction

Focusing on the River Avon and Kennet and Avon Canal (Dundas Aqueduct to Bath to Hanham Lock), Bath & North East Somerset Council is working in partnership with the Environment Agency, Canal & River Trust and Wessex Water to develop an evidence base, undertake public and stakeholder consultation and identify opportunities to deliver enhancements to these waterways and adjoining land.

It is proposed that the Water Space Study will conduct field surveys, mapping work, data collection and run stakeholder and public engagement events to focus on the following core themes:

- Assets and Asset Management;
- Mooring Strategy and Navigation;
- Regeneration & Development;
- Water quality & Environmental Enhancement; and
- Recreation and Leisure.

Throughout the process, community engagement will be an important element, including consultation, increased awareness, education, health and well-being, volunteering and recreation.

1. Boaters survey

1.1. Introduction

Between May and July 2016 those who live on-board boats in the Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) area were being asked how they use the River Avon and Kennet & Avon Canal, and how their need for basic services can be better met as part of the Water Space Study. This survey follows a previous '*Bath and North East Somerset Gypsy, Traveller, Boater, Showman and Roma Health Survey*' in 2013, which examined boater demographics¹.

The **Boaters Survey 2016** ran for six weeks, from Tuesday 24th May to Monday 4th July 2016. It looked at how far boaters travel, the type and size of crafts used, and the range of facilities they need whilst on the canal and river in the B&NES area. Results were made available to the Bath Water Space project to enable facilities such as water points, sewage disposal and mooring areas to be planned and provided.

The survey was carried out by design, engineering and project management consultancy Atkins Ltd on behalf of the newly formed **Bath Water Space Partnership** (made up of B&NES Council, Canal & River Trust, Environment Agency and Wessex Water). The survey will help the partners better understand what the needs are for live-aboard boaters and how they can be better provided for.

The survey was available as an e-survey and as a downloadable pdf. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in **Appendix A**.

1.2. Dissemination and publicity

The survey went live on the Sunday 22nd May and closed on Monday 4th July 2016. The survey could be completed online using SurveyMonkey[®] or in hard copy. One key element of the success of the survey was to publicise its existence to the target audience and to encourage them to complete it. The latter was especially important as one sub-set of the target population, liveaboard boaters with no home mooring, can feel vulnerable to unwarranted intervention in their lifestyle and thus be reluctant to respond to questionnaires such as this.

Sam Worrall, traveller outreach officer for Julian House, played a critical role in the development of the survey questions and in encouraging boaters to respond. Patrick Moss (Moss Naylor Young) also encouraged responses through his network of contacts and through the internet.

The survey was posted on Facebook groups that Patrick Moss and Sam Worrall have access to including, Canals and Rivers UK, Association of Continuous Cruisers, Kennet and Avon Boaters, Canalwise and also on Canaworld.net, a canals based discussion forum. In all cases readers were encouraged to forward or repost the link links were removed after Monday 4th July, although where links have been forwarded by third parties this isn't always possible. Periodically, links were reposted or "bumped" (commented on by team members to put them at the top of newsfeeds) to encourage responses. Posters were displayed at various locations along the canal, on community noticeboards, such as in the visitor centre at Brassknocker Basin, and also informally at locations where other events are often advertised, such as on the stop-planks by Limpley Stoke Bridge. Some of these leaflets were given out to B&NES community contacts for distribution. This form of dissemination is informal and undocumented but appears to have been effective. Finally, the survey distributed via the River Avon User's Consultative Committee, and was included in the Waterspace newsletter of Wednesday 25th May which has a distribution list of over 400 people and organisations interested in Waterways.

Two formal meetings were held with representatives of liveaboard boaters, one in B&NES offices on the Monday 6th June with boaters on the River Avon, and one in Hungerford on Monday 13th June with the Kennet & Avon Boaters Action Group (KABAG). At both meetings questions were asked by boaters regarding the purpose of the survey and some of the questions. We were able to reassure the boaters that the survey was not seeking to enforce Canal & River Trust policy, nor was that the purpose of the study and

1

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/bnes_health_study_report_final_full_report_inc_appendices.pdf

that the survey was not an attempt to nudge people off boats into a land based lifestyle. This message was reiterated in informal, impromptu discussions on other occasions.

Overall, the survey gained 102 respondents. Given that it was targeted at liveaboard boaters who spend a lot of time on board (rather than occasional or holiday boaters) it is difficult to know the exact size of the target population. Canal and River Trust identify around 600-650 boats on their waters in the B&NES area at any one time, with around 150 having no home mooring (by definition this group is transient) thus the survey reached between 16% and 50% its target population.

Boaters Survey 2016 – Now Open!

ATKINS




Those who live on-board boats in the Bath & North East Somerset area are being asked how they use the River Avon and Kennet and Avon Canal and how their need for basic services can be better met as part of the WaterSpace Study.

ONLINE SURVEY
www.waterspace.org.uk






Hard copies are available on request from Rachel Lambert at Atkins on tel. 01454 662840

Closing date: 4th July 2016

Results of the survey will be made available in **September 2016** on the website above.



This is an independent survey commissioned by the Water Space Partnership:



www.waterspace.org.uk

Figure 1. Poster advertising the survey

2. Previous survey results

2.1. Background

The 2013 Boaters Survey was undertaken by B&NES using interviews. It included a much smaller sample than the recent survey. Its results were used to guide the current survey in terms of both scope of questions and the target reach. In addition, also in 2013, there was also a separate Health Needs survey of Boat Dwellers and River Travellers which captured information from up to 30 respondents. The following is an overview of the findings of the survey.

2.2. Moorings

Eleven boaters were interviewed. At the time of the interview, all interviewees were moored in the B&NES study area, either permanently or temporarily, between Hanham Lock and Dundas Aqueduct. Of the eleven, seven had no mooring whilst three had a permanent residential mooring: this is a very significant difference to the 2016 survey where, of 102 respondents, only seven stated that they had a residential mooring. No one in 2013 claimed to be living on a non-residential mooring. The difference was primarily down to the small sample size but there may also have been a reluctance for people to admit they were on a non-residential mooring in a face to face interview.

The B&NES health needs survey (which also had a low sample rate) identified six boaters with moorings and that 75% of boaters were nomadic at least in the summer. This reinforces the pattern found in the 2016 Boater Survey.

Within the *Boat Dwellers and River Travellers Review* (2013), which reports the findings of these surveys, is a survey by Canal and River Trust dated 2011 (note: CRT were not created until 2012, this survey was presumably undertaken by their predecessors British Waterways) that identifies 36% of boaters would prefer a mooring in a small marina, 31% a large marina with facilities, and only 24% an on-line mooring on the offside. However, there is no indication in the report as to the target population for this survey, and it may be that the target was all boaters nationally rather than residential boaters local to Bath. In any event, the findings are rather different to those in the 2016 Boaters Survey. Anecdotal evidence supports the claim that residential boaters do not favour larger marinas.

2.3. Reasons for living on a boat

Of the eleven interviewed, nine stated that living afloat was a lifestyle choice. One respondent stated that they were “too old for a mortgage” (i.e. financial) and another that it was “in a sense” a lifestyle choice, as it was the best form of accommodation that they could afford. Two out of eleven is very comparable with the findings of the 2016 survey where 20% stated that cost was a reason for living afloat. In comparison, the B&NES *Health Needs Survey* reported 59% as stating that cost was the main reason for living afloat. Rather than being a discrepancy, this shows the issue of small sample sizes.

2.3.1. Employment

Employment was not covered in the 2016 survey, instead the survey focused on the need to travel without ascertaining why travel was needed. At a general level, if respondents needed moorings with access to car parking it was not felt to be within the remit of the survey to question why this was.

In the 2013 survey, out of eleven people interviewed six were employed, two self-employed, two retired and one seeking work.

2.3.2. Occupancy

The B&NES *Health Needs Survey* (2012-13) identified 23 respondents (77%) were living in single generation households on board – this is in line with the 2016 survey although the definition “single generation” does not quite align with “children 17 [years old] or under” used in the 2016 survey.

2.3.3. Summary

The data presented above has been taken from the 2013 B&NES report on Boat Dwellers and River Travellers – the data presented often supports the findings of the 2016 survey and where it does not clear factors can be identified as to why not, most notably small sample size in the 2013 data but also different target populations for some data. None of the findings suggest that the 2016 data is flawed and thus the latest survey provides a robust basis for further research and decision making.

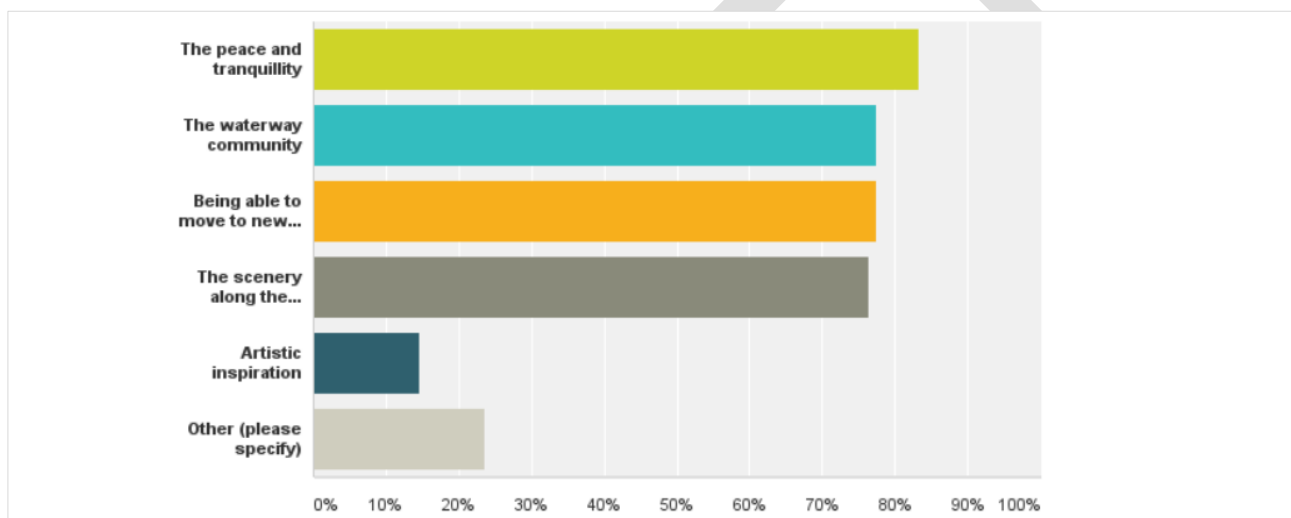
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3. Survey results and analysis

In this analysis we seek to examine the majority pattern on various factors that affect the ability and need for facilities provided to liveaboard boaters and also the minority position for those that do not fit the overall pattern. It is important that the ability to provide for the majority is not restricted by the needs of a minority (in the analysis it becomes apparent, for example, that a facility serving only narrow boats will serve 85% of the market) but also that the minority interest is not harmed by providing for, or regulating for, only the majority and nor are they swamped by the majority (for example, if only a limited number of facilities can be made available for wide beam boats, it may be necessary to give these craft priority). This principle will be especially important for certain patterns of boat use and occupation.

3.1.1. Q1: What do you like about living on a boat?

Question 1 was in part intended as a gentle introduction to the questionnaire: offering a multiple choice answer in which respondents could give more than one answer. Overall, 83% valued peace and tranquillity whilst over 75% voted for the community, the ability to move to new places and the scenery. This proves of value when considering the answers to questions regarding mooring locations later in the questionnaire.



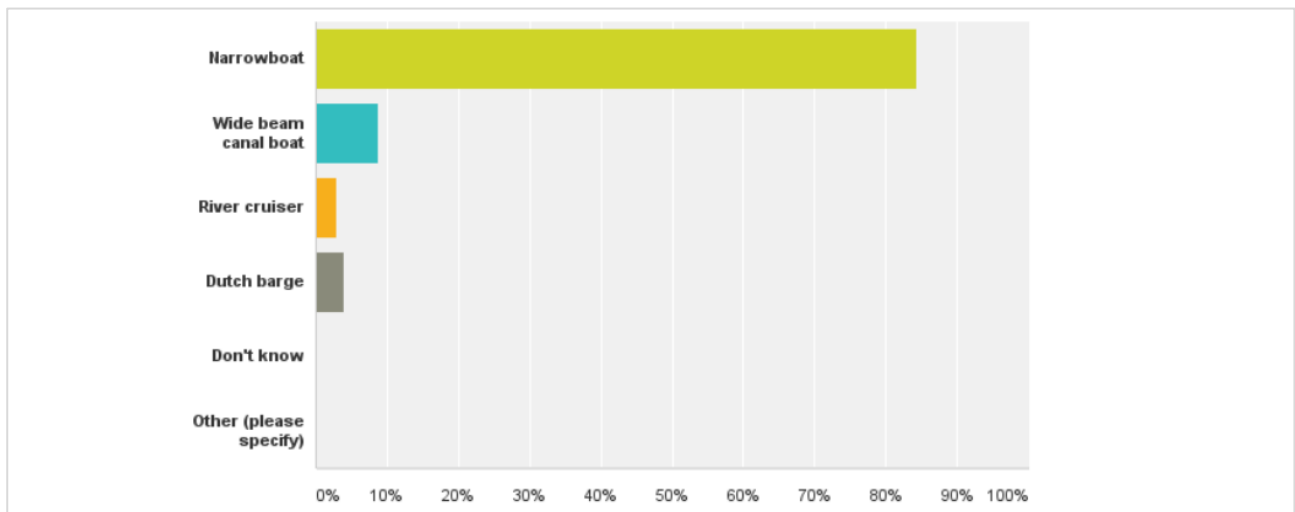
3.1.2. Q2: What type of boat do you have?

Question 2 to **Question 6** cover the type of boat that respondents have: the pattern emerges that the majority of these boats are steel narrow boats over 50 feet in length and with an engine so they are capable of moving under their own power. This response helps shape any mooring and facilities provision in that there is a need to accommodate longer boats, which corresponds with anecdotal evidence that some of those with continuous cruiser licences* for 70 foot boats struggle to find a mooring because none are available for boats of this length.

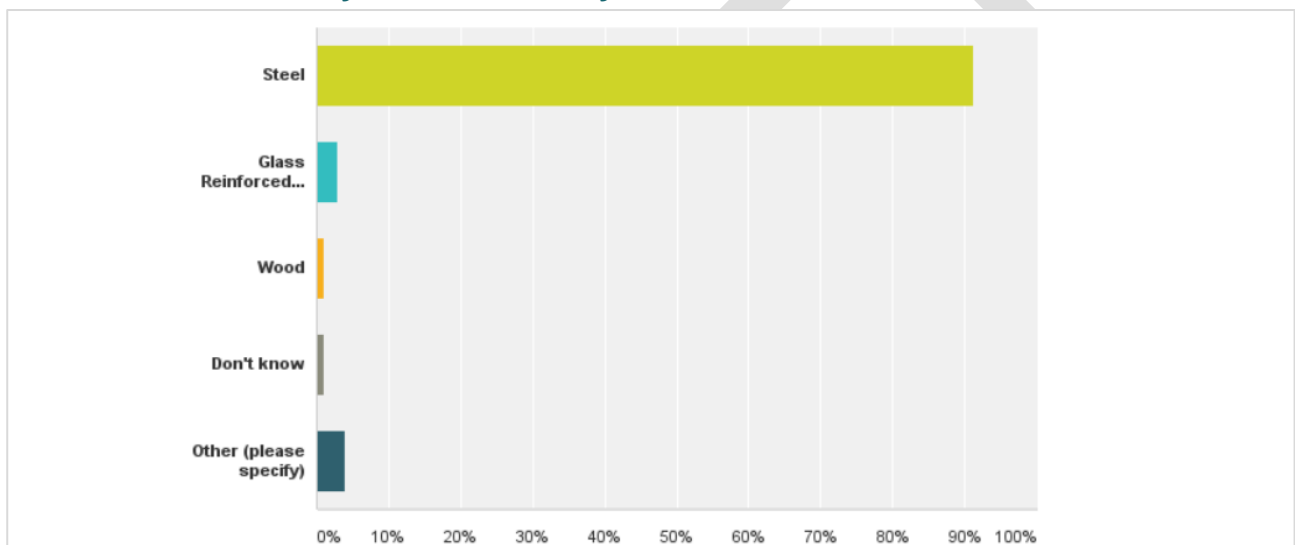
**"continuous cruiser licences" are licences where the licence holder has declared that they do not have or need a home mooring "where the boat may lawfully be kept" as they engaged in "bona fide navigation": They are required to "satisfy the board" that this is the case (British Waterways Act 1995)*

Whilst ideally provision should include boats over seven feet wide (15% of respondents had such boats) provision for narrow boats serves 85% of the respondents and one must assume therefore 85% of the market. This is significant because of possible extensions along abandoned canals (The Somerset Coal Canal in B&NES, the Wilts and Berks in Wiltshire) would be narrow beam and in some instances side arms and small basins may be more cost effective or may only be feasible if width is restricted.

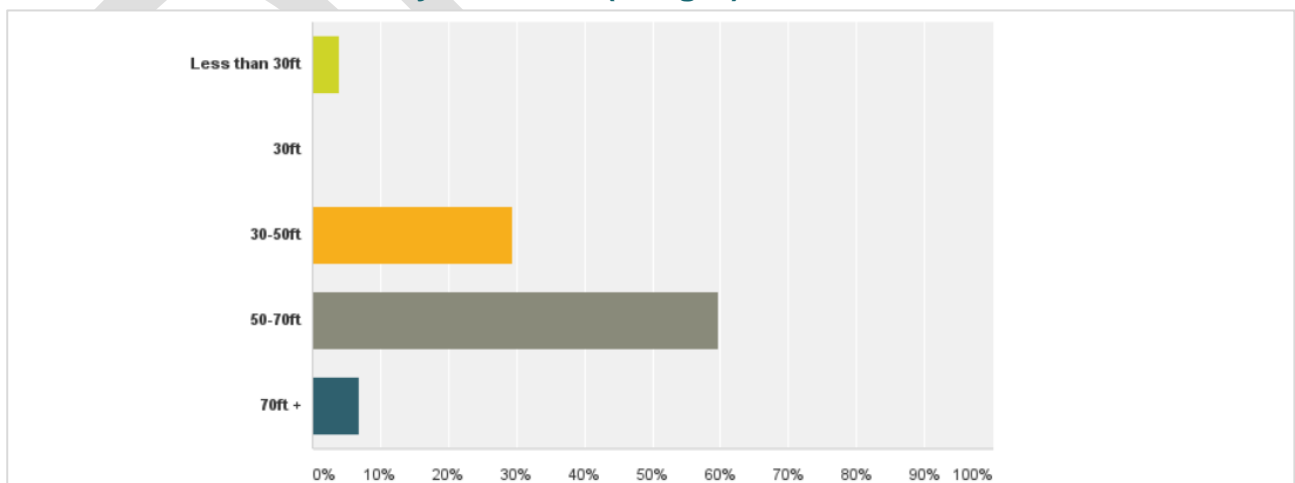
Against this, a significant minority of boats are less than 50 feet long (34%) or more than seven feet wide (15%). Some classes of boat in use on the canal, such as former Norfolk Broads Cruisers and former oil rig life boats, will be both less than 50 feet long and more than seven feet wide. It is important that provision for these vessels is not neglected.



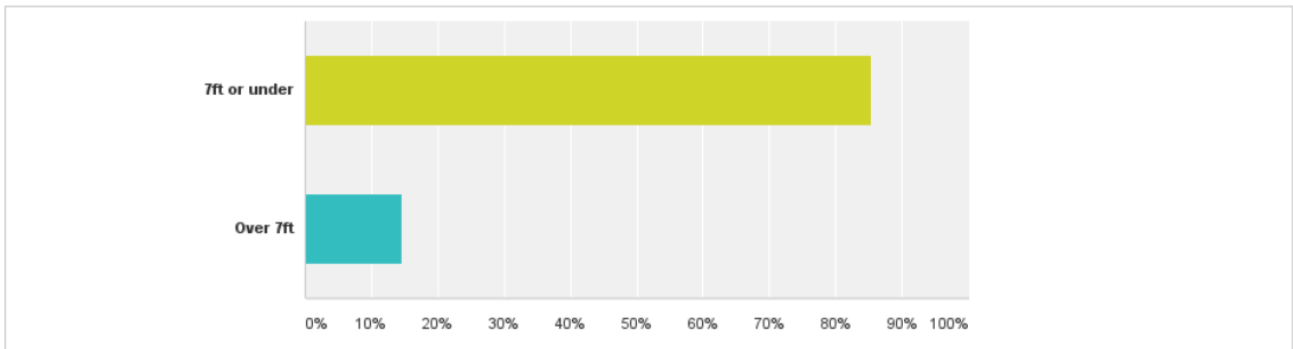
3.1.3. Q3: What is your boat mainly made of?



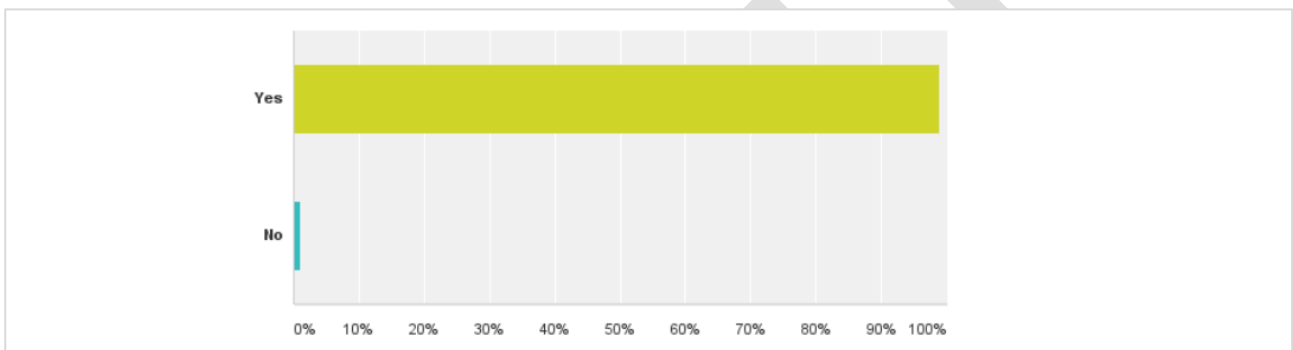
3.1.4. Q4: What size is your boat? (Length)



3.1.5. Q5: What is the size of your boat? (Beam)



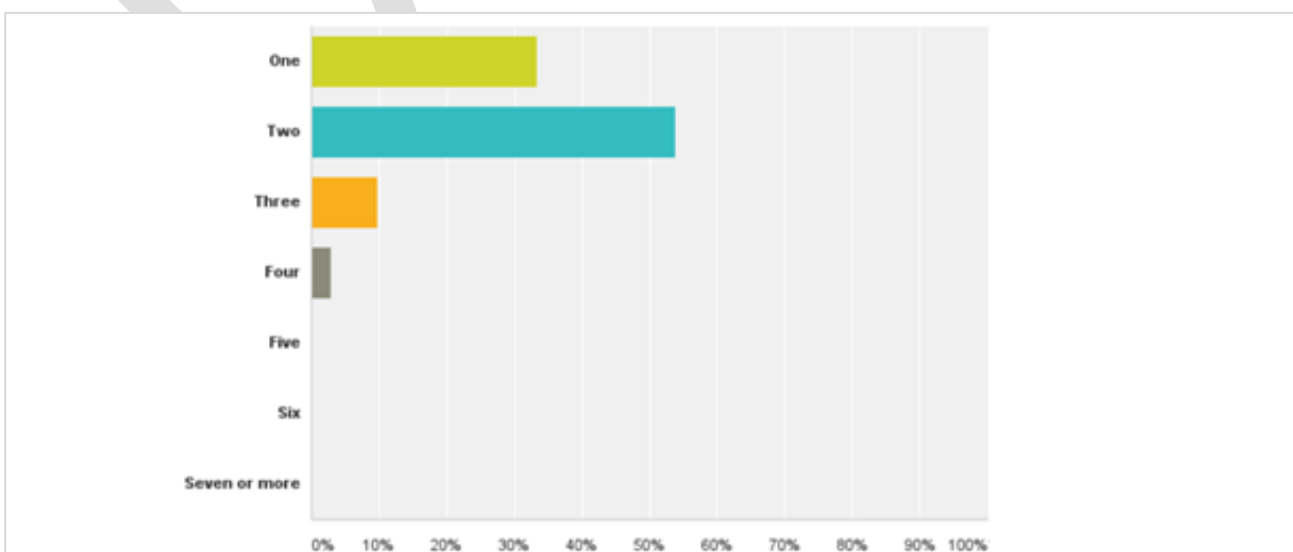
3.1.6. Q6: Does your boat have a fully functioning engine that allows you to move it?



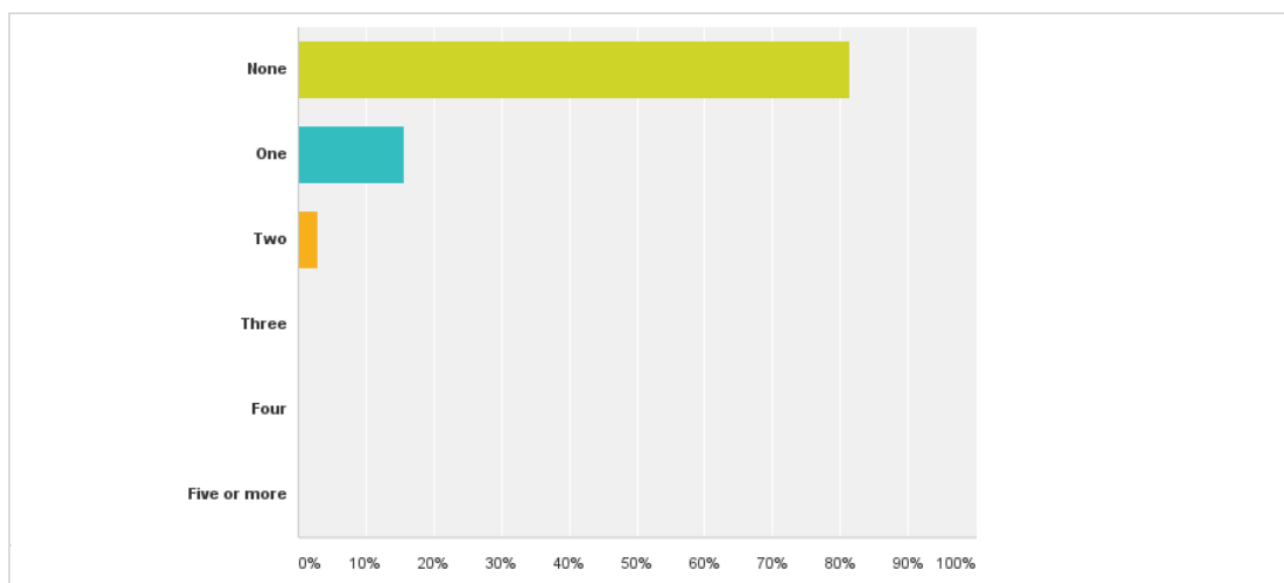
3.1.7. Q7: How many people live in your boat?

Question 7 and eight cover how many people live on the boat and whether any of them are children. One and two person occupancy makes up 86% of the total whilst 19% of boats have at least one child on board. From this can be concluded that a small percentage (at least 5%) have one adult and one child on board. Three respondents stated that there were two children living on board and three respondents reported a total of four people living on board.

Whilst it is a minority of boats that have children on board 19% is a very significant minority, albeit in a small population to begin with. As a result, the needs of these boaters to stay within travelling distance of facilities (schools, nursery, GP, midwife care etc.) needs to be considered whilst acknowledging that this is not a factor for the majority.



3.1.8. Q8: How many people who live in your boat are children (17 years or younger)?



3.1.9. Q9: Do you have a home mooring?

Questions 9 to Question 18 cover whether boaters have a home mooring and how they make use of their boats. Of the 102 respondents, only 25% had a home mooring and only half of these had that mooring within Bath and North East Somerset. **Question 10** asked whether the home mooring had residential permission; only seven respondents stated that they had. Anecdotal evidence suggests that residential moorings are indeed rare and this response is probably numerically representative, however there is probably a significant unofficial liveaboard community in marinas along the river and the canal who, for whatever reason, have not completed the questionnaire at all.

Nearly 60% of respondents would consider taking a mooring if one were available: in discussions there was some comments about answering this question, as take up of a mooring would be conditional upon a range of factors. The intention was to establish whether boaters were wedded to continuous cruising or whether a home mooring “in the right circumstances” would appeal, we can conclude that over half of those boaters answering this question would be interested in a home mooring, although we must assume this figure includes the 25% that already have one. This means that rather under half of those boaters who are continuous cruisers would be interested.

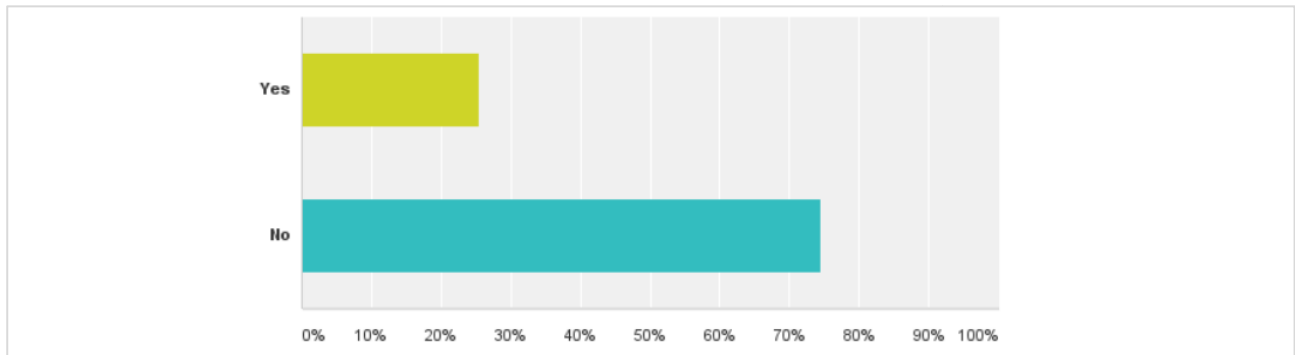
This set of questions also explored where boaters would prefer a mooring if one were available, over three quarters stated that the non-towpath side of the canal would be their preference, whilst only two respondents favoured a marina location. This reflects the perception (to some extent justified) that marinas don’t fulfil the qualities that respondents in question one stated they preferred. However, in terms of resources this presents a challenge as, in theory an unlimited number of marina berths could be provided whilst there is a clear finite limit to how many on-line moorings can be accommodated.

Eighty percent of respondents stated that the main use of their boat was as their home, with nearly half of the remaining stating they used the boat as a second home for extended periods. Some caution is needed as the sample is 102 responses and thus this second element represents only 10 boats. However this does indicate a significant use of the canal as a second home, there may be some benefit in finding how far away these people normally live and whether they cruise or stay on a mooring in this use.

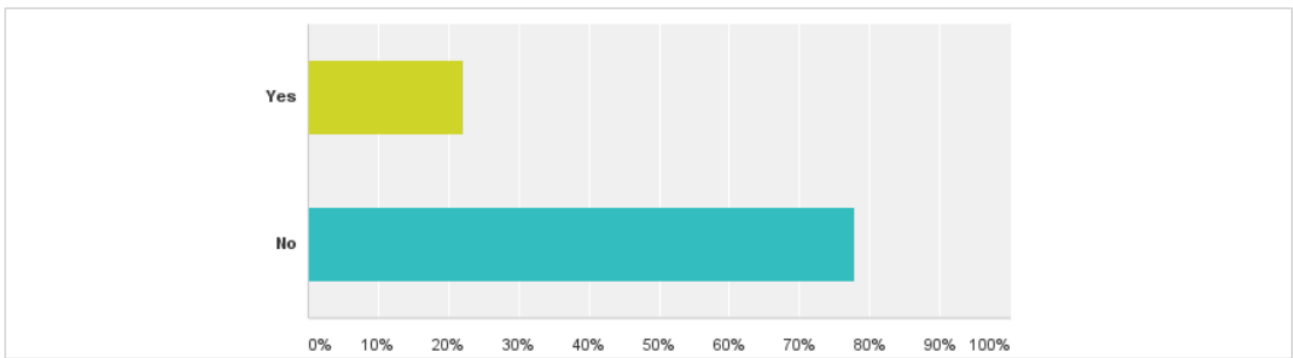
The cruising range question is geared to the waterway in the Bath area, and the survey was targeted at boaters in this area, so it is no surprise that 46% of boaters give an answer that covers all or part of the canal between Hanham and Devizes: only 10% restrict their cruising range to B&NES, a figure than in part is due to the arbitrary nature of local authority boundaries when travelling by canal: few would turn back at Dundas Aqueduct through choice. 31% gave their cruising range as “other”.

The answers to “other” on the cruising range question are listed in Appendix B: many are variants on the theme of a cruising area based partially in Bath, with some respondents stating they covered the whole network (this in keeping with anecdotal evidence known to the report authors). However the trend is clear, at least a very large minority (nearly half) of respondents don’t travel west of Devizes, meaning their cruising range is over 31 miles of waterway if they use the river, and around 20 miles of Canal if they do not. Service delivery to this group is therefore focused over a comparatively short distance, however for most of this group cruise outside the B&NES area into Wiltshire.

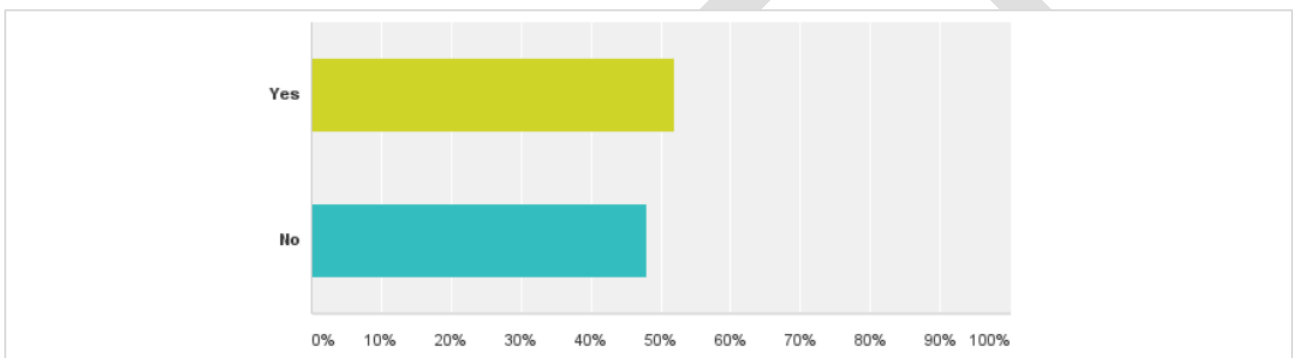
Just over one third of respondents regularly cruise the River Avon: whilst the survey didn’t define “regular” use of the river it is reasonable to conclude that these respondents regard the river as part of their cruising area.



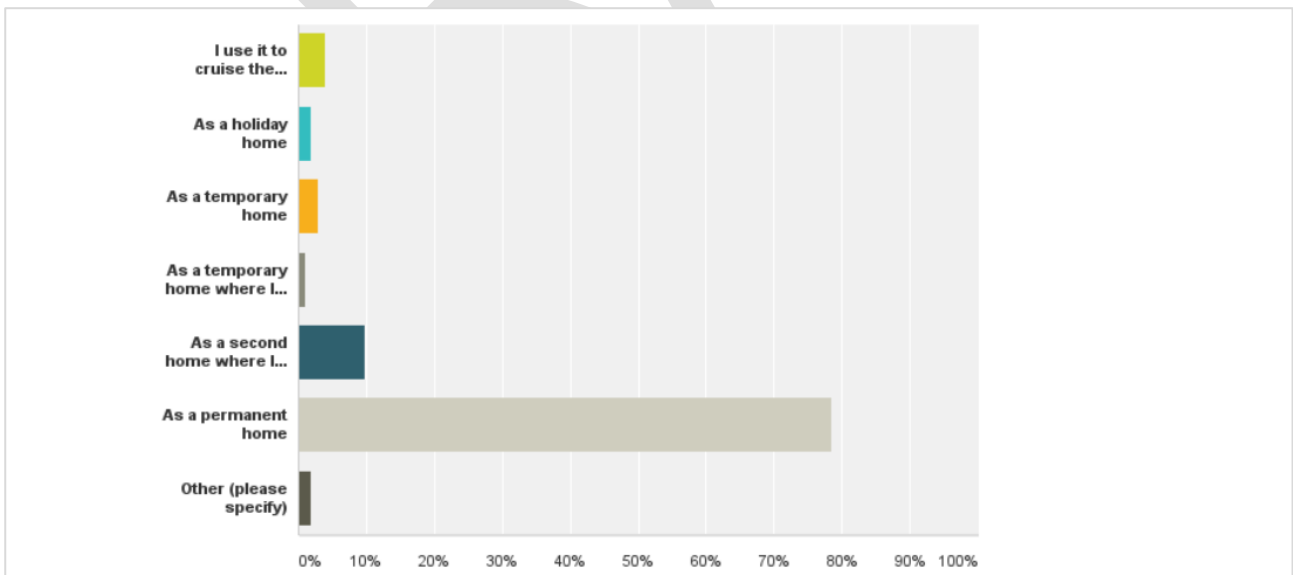
3.1.10. Q10: If you answered YES to Q9: Is it a residential mooring (mooring with residential planning permission)?



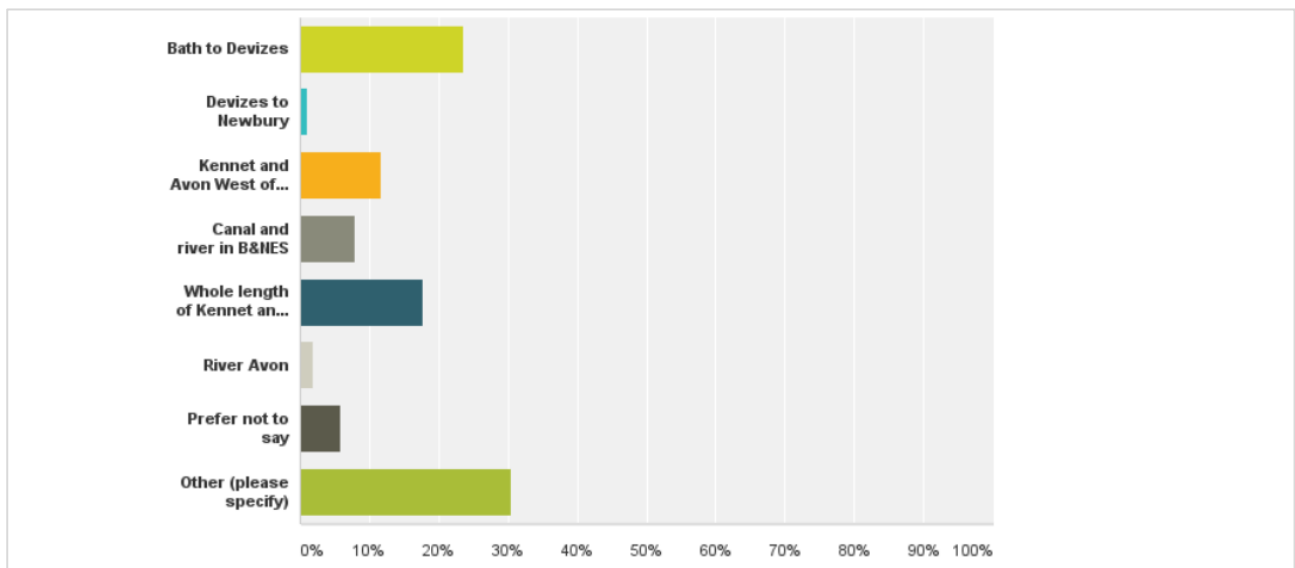
3.1.11. Q11: If you answered YES to Q9: Is the mooring in Bath and North East Somerset (between Hanham and Dundas)?



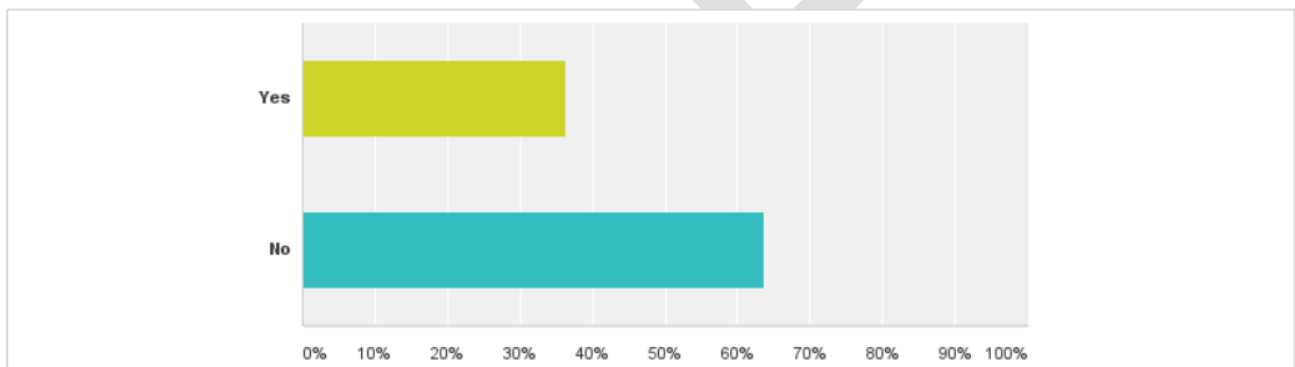
3.1.12. Q12: Which of the following options best describes how you use your boat most of the time?



3.1.13. Q13: What is your cruising area?



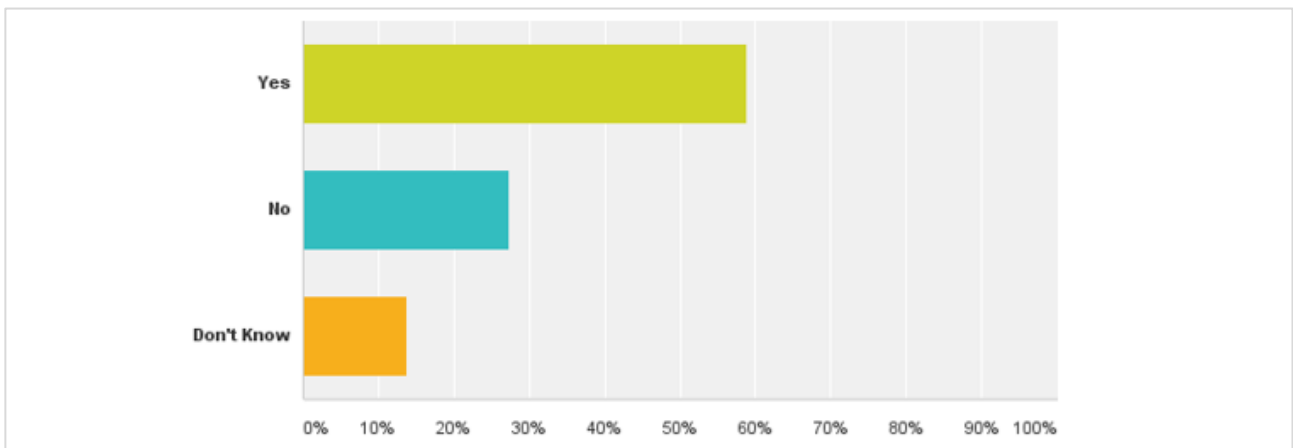
3.1.14. Q14: Do you regularly cruise on the River Avon?



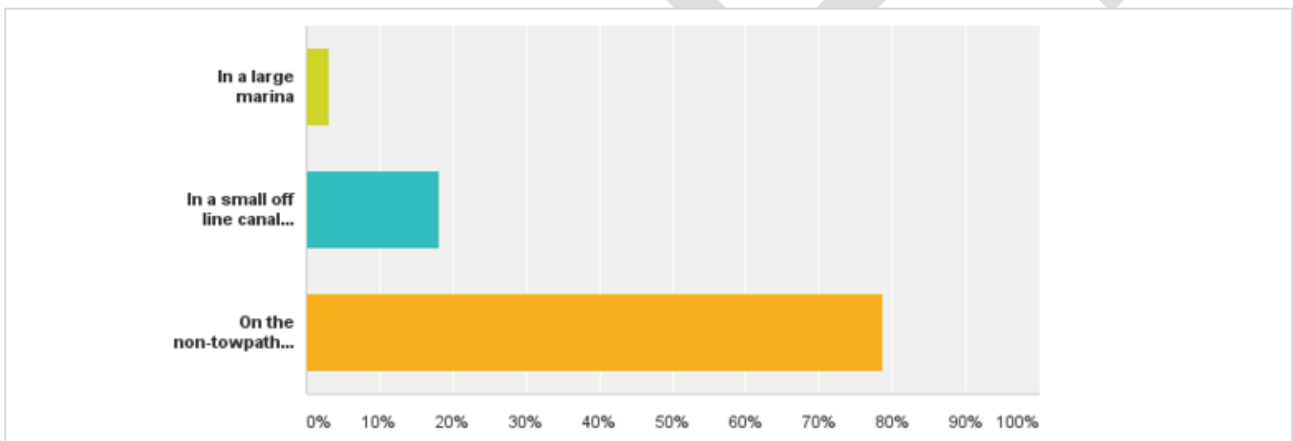
3.1.15. Q15: If you answered NO to Q14: What would encourage you to cruise the River Avon more regularly? and Q16: If you answered NO to Q14: Is there anything that puts you off cruising the River Avon more regularly?

There were 60 responses to **Question 15**, and 54 to **Question 16**, are listed in Appendix B: In summary a significant number (38 out of 60 responses to Q15) of responses stated either that there was a lack of mooring opportunities or that the respondent wasn't confident there are mooring opportunities (note, there are few mooring opportunities so this lack of confidence is well founded). Others stated they lacked confidence in their ability/their boats on the river (note: enjoyment of and confidence on rivers generally is something that separates many boaters – some love rivers and many avoid them if possible. Some respondents commented on a lack of facilities e.g. waterpoints and pump out. Finally, some respondents, conscious of CRT monitoring their movements, stated they weren't sure that CRT would log them on the river (note, there have been instances of boaters being accused of "not moving enough" when the reality is that the boat has moved to somewhere it hasn't been logged: possibly beyond the scope of this study there is an ongoing debate that CRT's logging process for boats is not fit for purpose for this reason).

3.1.16. Q17: If permanent serviced (water, electricity, sewerage etc.) moorings were more readily available in B&NES would you consider taking one?



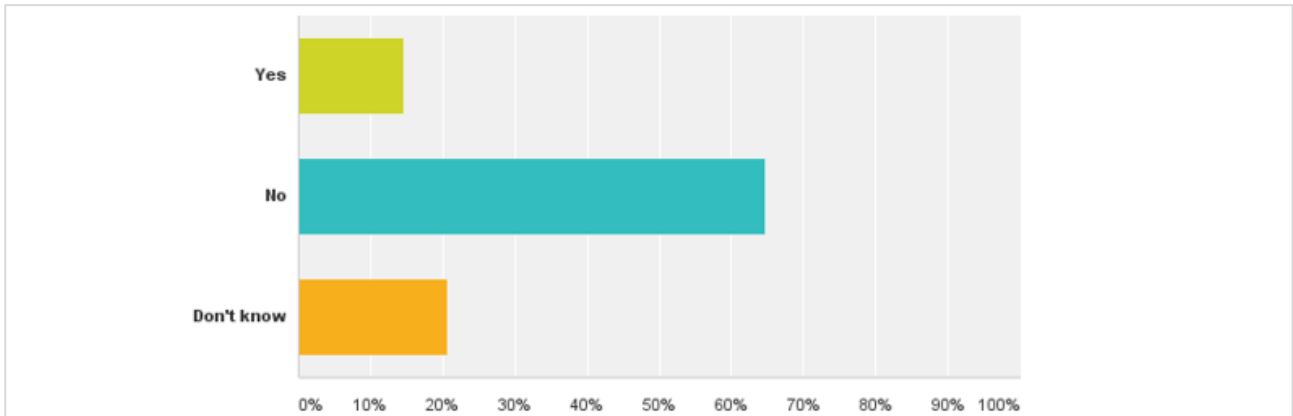
3.1.17. Q18: If you answered YES to Q17: Which type of locations would you consider taking a permanent serviced mooring?



3.1.18. Q19: If you answered YES to Q17: What do you consider to a reasonable price per month?

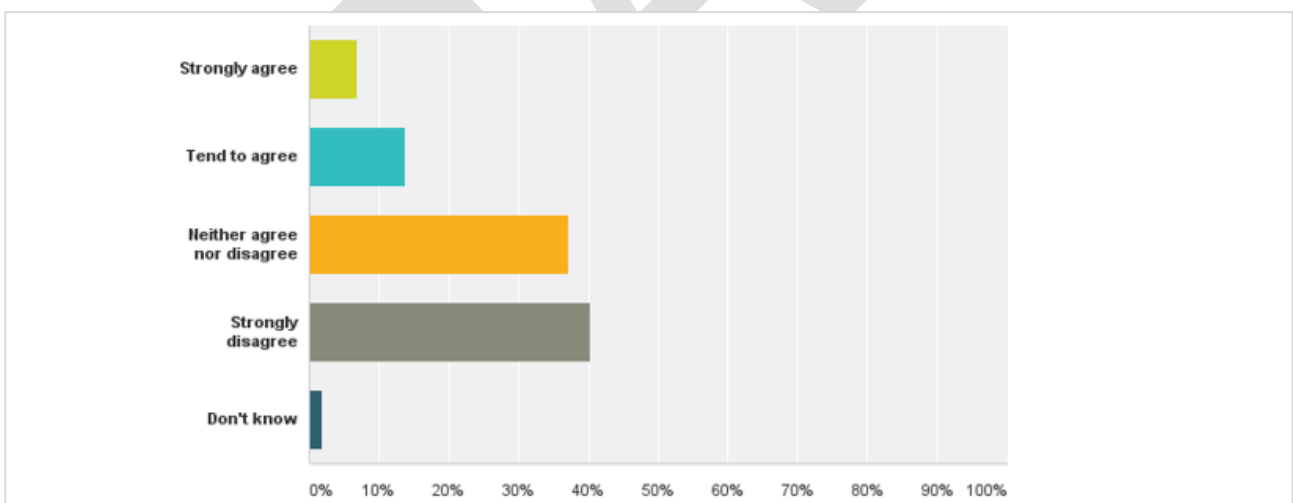
Again, a detailed analysis of these responses will be presented. Sixty-two respondents gave an answer to this, and whilst the range was from £50 to £500 a month most were at the lower end of this spectrum, with 30% giving a price of £100 a month or less, a further 33% giving between £100 and £200, and 25% between £200 and £300. On the basis that these respondents had “typical” boats in excess of 50 feet long there are no moorings at present charging the lower rates even if they were available (very few moorings become vacant in the study area) and these rates would suggest that conventional marina moorings at marina rates are not going to meet the demand for moorings on the Western Kennet and Avon: an alternative model may be required.

3.1.19. Q20: Would you consider alternatives to living on a boat such as living in similar accommodation on land (e.g. Tiny Homes)? (Tiny Homes are homes of between 100 and 400 square feet (10-40m²) floor area either on wheels or on a foundation.)



3.1.20. Q21: To what extent to you agree or disagree that a lower cost of living is your main reason for living on a boat?

Question 21 and **Question 22** are related and seek to determine to what extent living on the waterways is a free choice or whether it is one made because of economic circumstances and restricted alternatives within a budget. 65% answered that “Tiny Homes” would not be an alternative although this still leaves 15% that would consider such options (20% “don’t know”). Research into wider housing needs may add to this and indicate that for some household affordable self-build or “Tiny Homes” may well be an attractive option to add to B&NES housing offer. 20% of boaters felt that lower cost was their main reason for living on a boat, which gives weight to the 15% who might find “Tiny Homes” attractive.



3.1.21. Q22: When cruising would you consider paying for short term serviced moorings where services were included (e.g. laundrette, showers, pump out, and electricity hook up)?

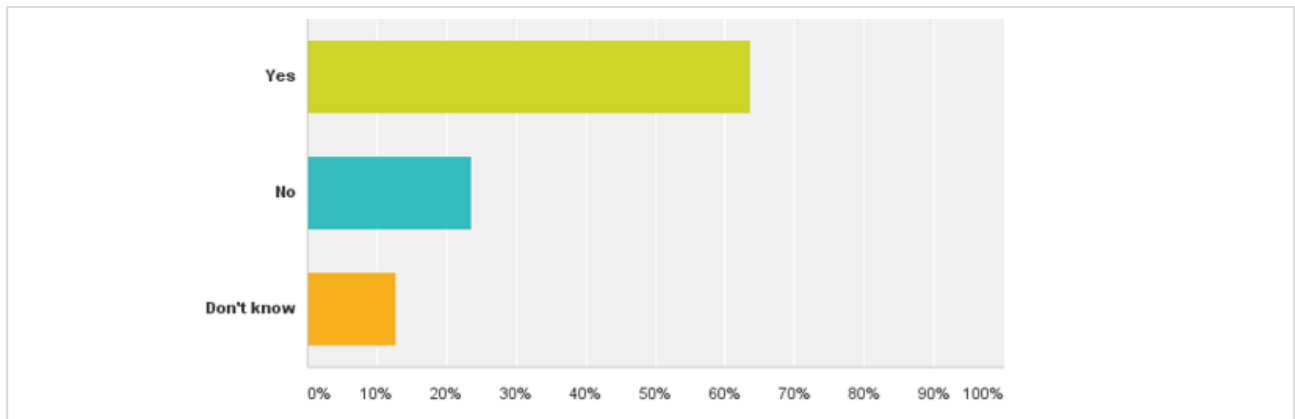
These questions were aimed at establishing why boaters moor where they do, and whether extra facilities (rather than simply extra moorings) might help. The top three factors in choosing where to moor were [pleasant surroundings, safety and security and avoiding flood risk, all of which scored over 80% very important/fairly important: Access to services such as sewerage and waste disposal was also highly rated at 76%

The next most important were all transport related, road access, parking and access to public transport, all around the 60% very/fairly important. Anecdotal evidence of boaters being opposed to new parking

restrictions in certain locations supports this, as does the question on main mode of travel in which 60% gave car or motorised vehicle as their main mode of transport. This, and the other modes listed, correlate closely with the method of travel to work data for the B&NES area in the 2011 census.

The desirability of services is reflected in the response to **Question 22**, where over 60% of boaters would consider paying for short term moorings where facilities are included.

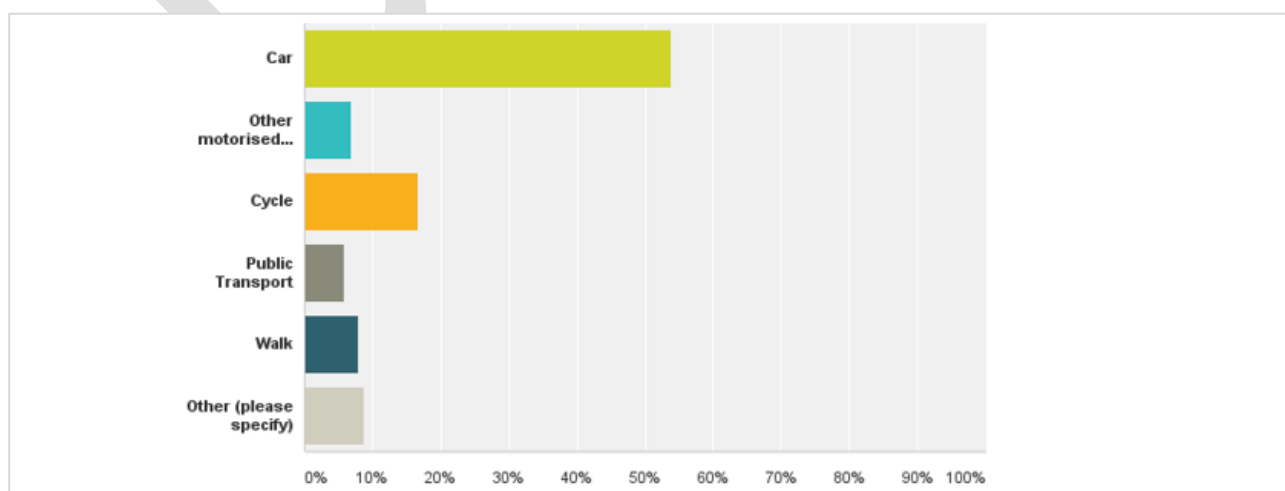
In one discussion with boaters groups it was felt that factors such as the depth of water at the mooring should have been included – this would indicate that there may be mooring locations that are desirable but not practical for reasons related to the navigation.



3.1.22. Q23: When choosing where to moor (whilst cruising) how important are the following factors?

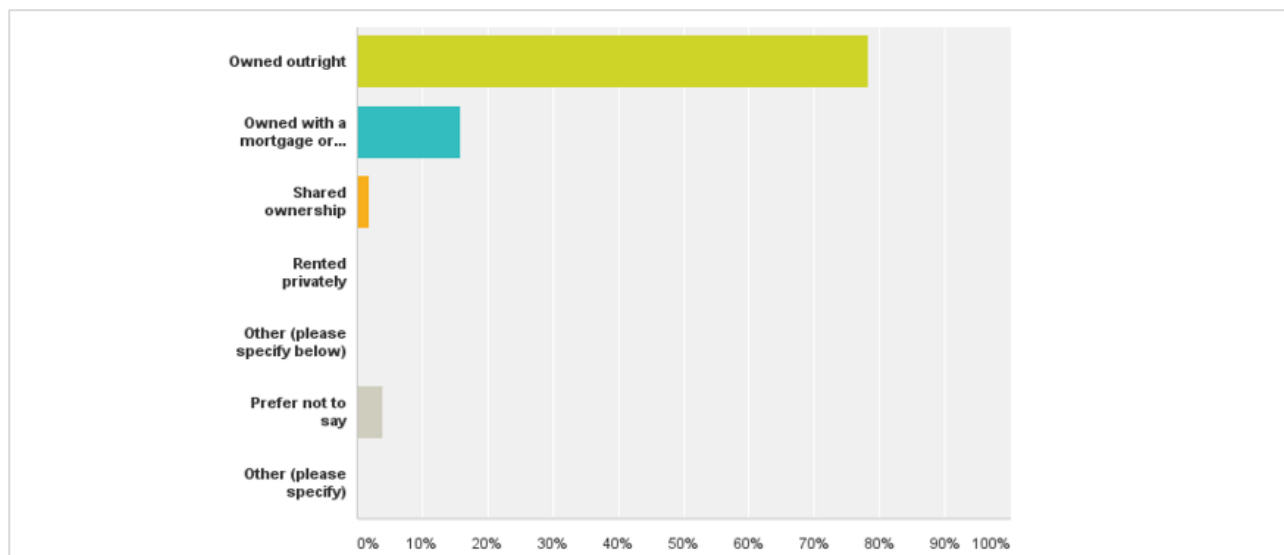
	Very important	Fairly important	Neither important nor unimportant	Of little importance	Not important at all	Total
Road access	20.59% 21	43.14% 44	14.71% 15	12.75% 13	8.82% 9	102
Parking	19.61% 20	39.22% 40	18.63% 19	12.75% 13	9.80% 10	102
Local shops	9.80% 10	37.25% 38	35.29% 36	15.69% 16	1.96% 2	102
Public transport	11.76% 12	45.10% 46	20.59% 21	17.65% 18	4.90% 5	102
Attractive scenery/surroundings	49.02% 50	45.10% 46	5.88% 6	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	102
Schools	6.86% 7	5.88% 6	15.69% 16	8.82% 9	62.75% 64	102
Health services	6.86% 7	22.55% 23	30.39% 31	17.65% 18	22.55% 23	102
Employment	15.69% 16	27.45% 28	23.53% 24	9.80% 10	23.53% 24	102
Avoiding flood risk	48.04% 49	32.35% 33	11.76% 12	3.92% 4	3.92% 4	102
Services (sewage and rubbish etc.)	26.47% 27	50.98% 52	14.71% 15	5.88% 6	1.96% 2	102
Safety and security	39.22% 40	45.10% 46	13.73% 14	0.98% 1	0.98% 1	102

3.1.23. Q24: What is your main mode of travel, aside from your boat?



3.1.24. Q25: Is your boat...

Nearly 80% answered **Question 25** as “owned outright” which may explain part of the appeal. Although cost wasn’t highlighted as a major factor in Question 21 it is possible to purchase a good quality narrowboat for much less than the deposit on a house, and then be in command of your own home/asset without the payment of rent to a landlord. No-one answered that they had rented the boat, although four respondents preferred not to say what their tenure was. This raises a question as to whether there are boats that are rented out that the survey missed. Anecdotal evidence, including the presence of occasional adverts offering or seeking boats for rent, suggests this market exists. However there are regulatory barriers to renting boats that are quite onerous, and thus both landlord and tenant may prefer not to admit they are doing this.



3.1.25. Q26: What would be the top three improvements you would like to see to the Canal and River network, and where would these be located?

There were 92 responses to **Question 26**, again a more detailed analysis will follow: the following points were repeatedly made:

- More/better moorings;
- Towpath improvement;
- More elsan*/rubbish/water/shower facilities;
- Less towpath you can't moor to (much is overgrown/eroded);
- More dredging/maintenance;
- Better understanding between different users;
- Fewer boats/hire boats/"booze boats";
- "looking after heritage";
- Enforcement of moorings to comply with law/basic rights of boaters to be respected/established; and
- Disabled moorings.

**Elsan is the standard term for boat and caravan toilet cassette disposal*

3.1.26. Equality questions

A series of optional questions sought out some defining characteristics of the respondents. Roughly 80% of respondents gave their ethnic group as white British, rather under 70% as heterosexual. The male/female split (for those who answered) was very close to 50/50, and 14% claimed a long term (12 months or more) disability that restricted their mobility at least “a little”.

3.2. Summary

In summary, the survey concluded that:

- Living on board is seen to offer a distinct, high quality lifestyle;
- Most boats are narrow beam and long (over 50 feet) but provisions is needed for shorter and wider craft as well;
- A significant minority of boaters with no home mooring would consider one if an appealing option were offered – offside on the canal is favoured rather than marina berths;
- For most liveaboards cost is not the defining reason for their choice, and correspondingly other low cost options such as Tiny Homes have limited appeal;
- Access to roads, parking, public transport and services is very significant in choice of short term mooring location; and
- Nearly all boats are owned outright by their occupants.

Appendices

DRAFT

Appendix A. Boater Survey

DRAFT

Appendix B. Written responses

Question
Q1: What do you like about living on a boat? Other (please specify).
The sense of being aware and in control of one's consumables and being able to reduce these and live more sustainably
The cost of living compare to a flat
Low cost housing
Beneficial to mental health condition
Freedom & interaction with nature it gives me child
Independence
Being close to nature, it's better for my mental health
Boat life!
My husband and I are young people, and we were able to buy the boat (our home) and live in the countryside, which would otherwise be inaccessible to us.
Being able to afford a home. Learning practical skills. Low impact living
low impact, affordable living. Being off grid.
an element of self sufficiency and freedom
Environmentally low impact, own our home and not indebted to multinational banks/electricity co. Etc.
Tiny environmental footprint
Wildlife, being self sufficient and low impact on the environment
Security of owning my home. Lack of affordable housing in B&NES.
Meeting other canal users, not just other boaters
The practicalities of living on a boat and the feeling of self reliance
the sense of freedom from rat race.
owning my own home, having a different "garden" every 14 days or less, being able to move if you don't like your neighbours, the freedom.
The wildlife and being closer and more connected to the changing seasons and environment.
Boating/ Boat handling; boat handling in company; working locks; travelling; living on the water; the history and heritage of the canals
Affordable houses
It's where I have always lived since I left home 25 years ago.
Q13: What is your cruising area? Other (please specify)
needs more temporary mooring places
Bath to Pewsey
Uk
Bath to Crofton
the network
Bristol to Newbury
Devizes to Bristol
Bristol to Trowbridge
On K&A to Bath then turn and will head up to Yorkshire
Winter mooring in Bath; summer cruise to London
Bath to Newbury
Bath to Pewsey
whole K&A every winter, entire canal system in summer
The whole network/country
Bristol to pewsey, mostly bath to devizes due to river flooding and Cain flight.
Bristol to Pewsey or beyond

Primarily western K&A/River Avon. The rest of the canal/river system in summer, so far including Thames, Grand Union, Oxford, Nene, Fens, Great Ouse, Cam.
Devizes to bristol docks
River Avon and bath to Devizes
Bath to Newbury
Bristol to devizes, canal and river
The whole of the British Waterway system and its connected rivers
River Avon from Hanham to Devizes
We cruise the river Avon and the K&A up as far as pewsey
Bristol to hungerford - k&a and river Avon. During holidays may go further afield
Bristol to Hungerford
Bath to Hungerford
Saltford to Devizes (approx)
I don't have limits. I go where I want when I want, and might pop up as far as the midlands sometimes.
Bristol to Devizes
Bath to Pewsey or Bedwyn
Q15: If you answered NO to Q14: What would encourage you to cruise the River Avon more regularly?
Although I answered yes, the number of places where it is safe and accessible along the river avon is very limited and an improvement on this would encourage me to use it a lot more. I also believe it would be a significant way of encouraging people who don't feel at ease using the river to moor along there.
More time
Accessible moorings
needs more temporary mooring places. there seems to be no pump outs on the avon. There are no permanent mooring spaces left either
More morning sites and rings on poles to moor on in the winter that can move up and down with water rising and falling
More experience. An anchor and new ropes.
Nothing.
Moorings
More moorings, friendlier residents on the Avon, some do not like boats mooring near their homes and are offensive towards us even though we are mooring lawfully.
Better weather and more moorings
C Increased confidence in handing the boat on the river.
Less private mooring spots, more moorings available for continuous cruisers.
More visitor mooring spots, floating landings and walls to moor on
Had get a Â£200 strimmer
More floating pontoons, available for safety at times of sudden flooding/spate. Less hostility from farmers, fishermen and the village people.
More mooring and facilities
Confidence & experience at the helm.
It feels dangerous in terms of current, no where to Moor and property.
Access to good moorings
Having the time away from work.
It all depends on the rainfall and the resultant speed of the river. More services and moorings would be helpful
More facilities to moor safely and for longer than say 48 hours at a time.
More riverbank mooring with nearby road access
1. Maintenance to Bath Deep Lock 8/9 2. More accessible short-term river mooring 3 More secure mooring at Broad Quay, Bath. Suggest CCTV 4 More accessible services, water points, sanitary stations
More clarity about mooring, and knowing whether C&RT would actually be able to sight us there.
Places to moor
More moorings and places to park cars
Nothing as I prefer the canals.

More floating pontoons, without them, leaving the boat in heavy rain to go to work is nerve wracking. I've seen lots of boats in fields, trees and over wiers. It's only possible to safely moor over Autumn winter spring using scaffold poles on a permanent mooring.
More accessible moorings
A stronger engine and weaker tides :)
More confidence about temp mooring spots and river conditions in general
It not being a river
Safe places to Moor up.
safe moorings
Less flooding, more safe mooring spots
I intend to this year
More confidence on handling a boat on a river
Places to moor with access and more water and waste points.
More safe mooring spots with rings, and more facilities
More mooring spaces
If I had a home mooring closer and if there were better provision for mooring
more safety measures
Additional mooring sites and amenity sites.
Don't use boat for cruising
Provision of more mooring locations.
Plenty of mooring spots and other facilities.
more 14 day moorings
More mooring spots and facilities
nothing
Some moorings, preferably longer stay than 48hr, with mooring rings.
Haven't had time to try it yet. We would consider it.
More 14 day moorings; more places where you can moor to farmers' fields etc/ private land for 14 days; less persecution of liveaboards by NIMBY parish councils and local residents with nothing better to do than spy on people's homes; better understanding among the public of the rights and entitlements of boat dwellers.
Somewhere safe to moor for more than 48hrs
I bought the boat xmas gone and will soon go on the river Avon. However I am worried about lack of moorings, parking but mostly theft and vandalism. Please help improve situation!
More places to moor safely
I don't think it's worth spending any money on persuading me to go down the Avon. I'll go when I feel like a jolly.
#NAME?
More places to moor up on the river.
More 14 day moorings Water and Elsan points
Q16: If you answered NO to Q14: Is there anything that puts you off cruising the River Avon more regularly?
Lack of suitable access to places to moor.
River flow and flood risk
not enough temporary mooring places ie 14 days. There are no permanent mooring spaces left either
We have little experience on the river and have been advised to avoid it in the winter
Flow of water. Inexperience on rivers
No
Moorings, services.
Heavy flow of water, especially in winter.
The weather and more moorings
Lack of mooring spots.
Winter time fluctuations in water level
Is a river
Only my lack of experience I intend to cruise the river in next 6 months after my first 2 years on the canal
nowhere to Moor.

We tow a second booty boat
Lack of good moorings
Fast flowing water and flooding
Inability to moor
Lack of places to moor
See above
Yes, I was worried about the currents and the lack of mooring. We would only be able to access it in the summer and we usually spend summers above Devizes anyway.
Flooding in winter. Tend to head in opposite direction in summer
Unfamiliar with the river but slowly getting to know it
The flow/currents. Nothing than can be rectified.
Please see above. The river floods very quickly overnight and I think we all mostly consider it unsafe in heavy rain. Only floating pontoons are safe and there are only 3 that I know of that boaters can use.
Mainly hearing about mooring difficulties
My engine isn't strong enough, propellor can't handle it, scared of the current and weirs as there aren't enough places to Moor up if anything went wrong
CRT ignore it in their "distance covered" calculations! Hence I go in a direction they measure.
It's a river
River going in flood. Lack of moorings on the river. Moorings at Putney weir removed, leaving just the road near coach station which isn't secure. boat untied in past and theft from boat.
lack of moorings and less predictable waters.
lack of places to moor
the potential flooding!
lack of mooring compaired to canal
Lack of mooring spots. Fast tidal water at times
Lack of facilities.
Being caught out by floods
Limited mooring spaces especially bearing in mind the flow of the river during periods of heavy rain
Not really. It's worth the cruise to get to Bristol. Visiting in the winter might be a problem with the variability of river levels
Lack of moorings and facilities.
Unsure of how safe it is to leave the boat, dont know where the moorings are.
not enough temp mooring along avon
no interest
Security, not enough moorings, water points or rubbish disposal.
Thinking its very busy in Bath possibly puts us off. Never been on a river so nervous. Not sure if there are mooring spots.
Flood risk
Not enough places to moor safely for more than 48hrs
see above.
Lack of safe places to moor overnight and not many boating facilities.
Not particularly. Unless the presence of Bristol counts ;-)
In the winter the water levels are dangerous. The lack of safe mooring spots.
I do cruise on it every summer, but again, not enough places to moor legally.
Lack of moorings and facilities
seasonality of river in terms of flow and flooding Lack of 14 day moorings and services
Q19: If you answered YES to Q17 (If permanent serviced (water, electricity, sewerage etc.) moorings were more readily available in B&NES would you consider taking one?): What do you consider to a reasonable price per month?
Although I answered yes to question 17 that is because I would consider it, however my preference would still be to move and to be based on the canal itself. I particularly wouldn't enjoy being based in a marina regardless of cost.
£200-£250 per month

£400 -5000
100
£50
£250 -350pm
£200
£100
£150
£100
£150
Up to 250pounds per month
£100 for 34' boat
Between £400 to £500
Free
Depends of quality of view, space around the boat, whether it gets any sun,how many other boats are wedged in, how close to neighbours. But £100 - £150 for a fair spot, it's just a little boat after all without the luxury of house living, fuel, coal, expensive and already paying CRT for licence, boat safety, insurance etc.
£200
£100
150
£300 Max
500
£200 per month
Depends on services, £200 would be fair if all services were included.
£50-£70
I answered no
£150.00
£150
£100
£100 I genuinely thibk any more is too much for what you're actually provided with
£100
£200
£250 if there were services.
200
£150-£200
£250
200-300 per month
£150-£200
£150 per month if it didn't have any facilities
£100
2-300
£30 per foot
£300
£250
200-400 pounds depending on services and amenities.
£600
£250
100
£150
200
70ft boat £300
£250
£150 - £200
less than £400 PM

£100-£200
Depends on location and facilities. I'd rather less facilities (as these can be navigated to by boat) at a lower cost. Under £200 per month.
Depends on location and facilities. I would prefer limited facilities at low cost. Perhaps £100-200 per month dependent on facilities and nature of mooring.
40
£250
125
£50 per month
£100
£100 per month for a 62' narrowboat. I think widebeams should be charged by area for hogging more of the surface area of the canal.
Between £100 and £175 per month
£50 pm
Q26: What would be the top three improvements you would like to see to the Canal and River network, and where would these be located?
River only comments: - Greater protection of nature - Clearing litter from the trees (All of the River Avon) - Greater protection of river dwelling communities/improved rights
1) Improved opportunity to moor along the river Avon between Bath and Bristol. 2) Improved relations and understanding between the various user groups of the canal and river network including CRT and boaters. 3) In the wider question of congestion at the western end of the Kennet and Avon I would like to see a clear distinction between those who actively live on the waterways, taking a proactive part in building a community and indeed looking after the waterways, and those who seem to use the canal as an opportunity to dump their boat on the canal without having to pay a mooring fee. The two are quite different and one adds nothing to the waterway environment and community and there is a perception that those who merely leave their boat, or worse yet don't have any form of license or insurance, are not targeted by CRT as they are harder to address. I am quite willing to accept that this may not be the case however it is fair to say that there is a perception that those who actively are living on the canal network at large are being disproportionately targeted and actively removed.
Improvements to towpath between Sydney Gardens and top lock Elsan/pumpout facilities between Dundas & Bath Make good towpath at linear moorings Bathampton (very pitted and full of puddles)
not fussed
needs more temporary mooring places. ie 14 day pump out facilities on the avon. needs more affordable permanent mooring spaces
More two week moorings in Bathampton area More elsan disposal points More freedom of movement within guideline from CRT
1. More elsan, bins and water points and better spaced (after Bradford wharf all the way to Seend for example has no water or elsan) to allow a better cruising pattern. 2. Repair work to eroded banks (or rings put in) as many areas are un-moorable due to lack of bank to hammer pins into. Lower Seend area and Bradford near Sainsburys are particularly bad. 3. Dredging. Many areas unsafe to moor as boat cannot be pulled close enough to bank. Plank slipping into canal is dangerous. This applies to too many areas to list individually.
Less 'development' (ie tarmac, signage, facilities, marinas) Better bus services and public transport links in the remoter lengths of the k&a Fewer hire boats and more restrictions on them.
More services More mooring rings and bollards Better overall maintenance
Dredging ALL of the K&A. Stopping the banks eroding. Freeing up more mooring spots by clearing reeds.
1. Dredging of the canal. 2. Maintenance of non-towpath side banks and vegetation. 3. Improvements to towpath and banks.
More elsan/toilet points, more taps, more accessible moorings. Positioned wherever possible.
More sewerage and recycling facilities. Sewerage facilities near bathampton would be useful
General maintenance to locks etc, more showers and water points, controlled number of hireboaters - the current amount is excessive and they are untrained and dangerous drivers at times.
More floating landings between bah and hanham. Being allowed to moor between bath and Saltford
More enforcement on boaters who claim to be continuous cruisers which never move!
Greasing the paddles would good
Suitable moorings. Access to shops and public transport

Less hostility from land owners, fishermen, sailing/rowing clubs and villagers. The miserable dark overgrown river stretch between Bath Midland Road and Weston Lock could be completely reinvented with sunlight, planting, lighting and rising pontoons. Occasional 24-48 hour access to mains power, to run a powerful Hoover, charge a battery and a laundrette would be marvellous.
More water points More parking facilities Less single sex stag parties on hire boats
Water. Sewage. Improvements with dredging
Another rubbish point between Semington & Bradford on Avon, Allowances for people with children to do longer cruises in the school holidays More trading boats encouraged on the K& A
Better mooring opportunities. Better water and sewerage facilities. Better access to services such as healthcare and social care
More 14 day moorings on the river (no hassle from land owners or other river users). Greater care taken of canal by CRT (banks are eroding and ledges make it difficult to moor). Clearance of trees fallen in river between Bitton and Keynsham which make navigation dangerous
More pump out services ? There are only 3 currently. More water in the canal. (we bottom out regularly.) less hire boat company's and each one having less boats.
Affordable moorings between Bradford and Bristol
Affordable moorings Upkeep and dredging of the K&A The top down reorganisation of the CRT to include boaters not just geared towards hire boats!
Armco bank sides Dredging Mud free towpath
1. More taps/service points Hungerford to Reading 2. Dredging on same stretch to allow more places to moor. 3. Locks in better condition
More visitor moorings. Better recycling facilities. more water points. All between Bath and Devizes
Better bank management. More arco pilings for mooring all over the network. More service points: water, rubbish and recycle
sufficient depth of water to moor. ability to get boat close enough to bank to moor and integrity of bank so can attach boat. parking for vehicles
more water points towpath mooring rings towpath bank maintenance and repair
Water and elsan at Trowbridge Water and elsan at Semington Elsan in Bath
Maintenance of the system; more strategic use of available funds, ie less faffing about with 'improvements'
More full-time trained staff, less volunteers
More dredging, towpaths improved on K+A canal
Actual maintenance of locks and swing bridges - bridges like Digger's Yard and Giles Wood are nearly inoperable for one person to open themselves. (Also, Digger's Yard is amusing because you CANNOT single-hand through this bridge as the towpath is on the wrong side from the bridge operation side.) Simple maintenance would prevent these bridges from breaking. I have seen hire boats ram difficult bridges in an attempt to open them. Maintenance would prevent this, and would be a pleasant day out for volunteers. Dredging throughout the canal, but problem areas include Trowbridge and the Long Pound. It is hard to moor in various areas, especially for deep-drafted boats. This means that mooring spots that are dredged become over-populated, which affects the bank. Better training for CRT volunteers who interface with the public. The ones at Caen Hill in Devizes and the lock at Bradford on Avon can be negative or hostile to liveaboard boaters. They are frequently grumpy and unhelpful, often getting in the way, and they seem to believe that you cannot refuse their assistance, or request it if needed (they only want to boss you around, and are often not helpful if you make requests of them, or decline to be bossed). There are certain older gentlemen volunteers who are well known for being sexist and making women uncomfortable. Boaters know exactly which ones these are. Even if volunteers are not being paid, they represent the charity, and they should be respectful and considerate.
More water access points. More litter management and regular clean ups of canal and introduce on the spot fines for idiots who throw rubbish in canal and river.
More places where you can moor for 14 days moorings on the River Avon. More water/waste/sanitary facilities on the River Avon for constant cruisers. More floating pontoons available for 14 days in areas of flood risk.
Recycling facilities at every disposal point
More 14 day mooring locations on River Avon, particularly near Keynsham and between Saltford and Bath. Preserve 14 day moorings at Mead Lane Stop punitive sanctions by Canal River Trust
Looking after history and unique character of canal. Better information about stoppages
get rid of the booze boats - the behaviour and noise really is destroying the tranquility of the canals, and it has worsened considerably over the last 5 years
Water points, mooring rings, car parking. Along the whole network

More online (towpath) moorings for those who want them for kids in school or health reasons. Located near but not directly in hotspots like Bath, Bradford on Avon etc
1. The freedom to continue to live our nomadic lifestyle within the law, without CRT aiming to reduce the number of continuous cruisers through unlawful guidelines that aim to be unworkable, in order that they may lead to enforcement action against us, and the destruction of our boats and lifestyles. To this end CRT have also worked with local councils around the country, and are doing so now in Saltford and have done in Bathampton, Oxford London and elsewhere to put parking restrictions on otherwise unused spaces that boaters park in, to increase 48 hour visitor moorings to huge stretches of canal where no hire boater or holiday boater ever wishes to moor, and to try to encourage continuous cruisers to permanently moor in a marina, which very few of us wish to do. Each time the impetus for these actions seems to be the prejudice of a local householder, against other people encroaching on their own little part of our lovely country. CRT say the number of continuous cruisers in this area hasn't increased in the last 5 years, but the number of hire boats and hire boat companies has increased from around 40 to around 200 in the stretch from bath to devizes. At the same time a 250 berth marina has been made at fox hangers and another at Hilperton, but they say that the canal here is overcrowded and they therefore want to reduce the number of continuous cruisers. So, um, that's the main one sorry! Everything else was fine until a few years ago. Mostly please try not to destroy our community, it's beautiful and gentle and unique. You have something incredible here that people come to see. They don't go to the equally beautiful parts of the network that are empty of live-aboard boaters. They come here. We bring life and love to the canal, Bath and the surrounding area. We work in hospitals and post offices. We run Glastonbury and all the smaller festivals. Play our instruments on the towpath, have our photos taken with the foreign tourists. Talk to the lonely old lady that walks her dog past new friendly humans every day.. And so and so on.. This is a whole way of being and we are all very worried. Please help and please don't allow the canal network to be sterilised and homogenised into a holiday theme park with no living exhibits. So that's 1,2&3 really but.. 2. An Elsan point at bath would be useful. There is a private one at the hire boat company but they don't generally let live-aboards use it. To use the river more frequently there would also need to be more here as I believe there is just the one below Saltford and we need to find one and a water point every 2 weeks. 3. Pff, nothing really, we're fine as long as we can actually turn around to fill up with water rather than keep cruising in the wrong direction for 2 days as CRT would have us do. Oh, on the summer weekends a hundred and fifty hire boats all empty their rubbish into one or two rubbish points and then we are told that the bins will be taken away if we don't stop abusing them (bath and Bathampton 2 years ago) so, more collections after the weekend to deal with the hire boat rush? Thanks! X
Dredging. Reinstating / repairing proper width to towpaths. Proper control over bankside vegetation. Various lengths of the Cut and river
A better relationship between boaters and CRT- relations are exceptionally poor. More bins and water points Allowances for longer stays during the cold dark months of the year - as fewer holiday makers enforcing the 2 week stay seems silly
More services above Caen Hill. Improved (safer) navigation above Caen Hill, ie. reeds ingressing for long stretches. Return to having a dedicated person caring for each stretchâ€”locks, paths, greenery, bridges and of course boaters. Current messy way is to fire-fight navigation problems from a central office and subcontract mowers to just push through everything once a month, regardless of beauty (in Spring/Summer) or necessity (in Winter).
More 14-day mooring space and more facilities on the river Avon. Better training of those holidaying on hired boats. Quality varies hugely between hire companies and in many cases is completely inadequate to ensure safety. Prescribed standards of training and inspection of training procedures is required.
More water and elsan points More buses Better towpath
The biggest issue on the river is the lack of a water point. Wessex water turn their point off at Saltford for the whole winter. Could this be made permanently on? In a dream world i d like to see the opening of the Berkshire arm from semington.
More moorings with services
Maintaining the canal/ivers for mooring. ie overhanging trees, reeds and other obstacles. Towpath maintained. Working water the toilet facilities. More laundry facilities. Please
more water points, elsan disposal, showers and loos, spread evenly along the canal
1. The river to have more 14 day moorings and to be monitored fortnightly in between bath and Saltford. 2. The river to have rubbish/ water and toilet point between Hanam and Saltford 3. Canal to be dredged !
Dredging? So boats to not get banked so easily, for example when passing or mooring. Also, for CRT Pump Out cards to be available in more places and more reliably!

Improvement to services on the river, esp access to recycling facilities More safety equipment on the river outside of the city centre More residential moorings, they don't need to be services, but so many people are forced to live on legal grey areas, either because their mooring isn't really residential or because they are forced to try and CC under increasingly vague but draconian rules enforced by CRT..
Better maintenance of services and the canal structure in general. A shake up of CRT Tighter rules and control of hire boat parties
More water and recycling points.more dog waste bins
More water, waste and recycling points.
More spots available for continuous cruisers and dredging. Bath to Newbury.
More mooring rings, clear away reeds, more water, rubbish and toilet disposal facilities between Bath and Devizes
Water points and pump-outs - as appropriate
Dredging on most of the K&A Disabled moorings Showers/laundry facilities
Uniformly clean Elsan facilities at about 10 lock+mile intervals. Ditto water points with reasonable pressure. (1000l/hr through a 100ft 0.5" hose.
Better, more accessible moorings, more sanitary stations and a sensible and frequent dredging programme along the entire length of the canal in B&NES.
Regular maintenance (dredging; lock repairs) Good hard standing and mooring loops where necessary regulation of hire boaters - anti social behaviour etc
Dredging, Maintenance including vegetation control entire network. Disposal facilities where possible
Dredging the towpath side of the canal. Repairing collapsed banks. To stop harassing cc'ers that are attempting to conform to their (unclear) rules.
Residential moorings Freedom from feudal & tyrannical landlords Some basic rights
1. CRT pump outs in particular between Dundas and Bath Top lock and on the Avon below Saltford 2. Better mooring provision on the Avon for stays of up to fourteen days plus better monitoring of those moorings by CRT as some boaters take advantage of this and overstay which gives boaters a bad name to locals whilst also being disrespectful of other boater's needs to moor. 3. Better education of hire boaters to respect the canal, other users and nesting wildlife.
Ease of mooring along banks - removal of excess vegetation and/or shelves that either cause boat to ground or prevent getting close in to the bank.
1. temporary mooring paces on river avon. 14day 2. more public pumpout stations on avon 3.more 2 day mooring paces on river avon.
More device points more safe mooring points on the river. Less harassment of live aboards from the CRT clearer guidelines, more relaxed guidelines for families with kids in school and for vulnerable boaters!
1) Bank improvements especially around Bradford On Avon, widbrook and whaddon as they have subsided in some areas and there isn't much bank left to put moorings pins. This is due to the speeding boats pulling the pins out of moored boats which in turn rips out a chunk of the bank. 2) Dredging especially around whaddon, seend and sells green as you have to moor quite far out from the bank especially if you have a deep draft. This means many spots are unmoorable. 3) More elsan points/rubbish points/water taps - there is a big gap in services between Bradford on avon and seend.
Dredging, bank improvements, parking facilities.
more services
2 week moorings on the river in bath, car park at avoncliff, water point at claverton
Better facilities Western end. Wider bank/towpath Whaddon lane.
Better Rubbish desposal, Hoops on 14 day moorings, more permanent mooring spaces.
Improved river moorings outside bath, better rubbish facilities, more mooring rings.
For CRT to stop its unlawful and punitive new policy from May 2015 of enforcement against boat dwellers without a home mooring, which is preventing boat dwellers from sending their children to school and stopping people from working. We should not be the only group of people in the uK whose children are not permitted to go to school and who are not allowed to work. These are fundamental rights and CRT should not be punishing people by the seizure and destruction of their homes for exercising these rights.
Dredge the canal More places to moor safely for more than 48hrs More water and sanitary and bin stations.
1.Canal and River Trust to have a good relationship with live aboarders. 2. Less hire boats for many reasons. 3. Dredge the canal so people can moor in more places.
More regular maintenance, especially of foliage in the summer
More visitor moorings, every couple of miles.
Fewer boats. Fewer canalside 'developments' such as marinas Less dog shit.

More water points that actually work (often taps are broken, water leaks, pressure is very low takes hours to fill up by which time it's dark). More sanitary points that actually work. Proper recycling (all types of recyclables) and collection to happen more regularly - often they are bursting, smelly and unsightly and this reflects badly on CRT and boaters from outsiders.

Longstay (two week) moorings on the river between bath and Bristol. More elsan/water points. All the trees to be cut down.

More mooring areas - repair damaged banks & move overgrown areas

More Elsan and water points and more places to moor between Devizes and Pewsey.

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