

A photograph of a canal in London, likely Regent's Canal. The canal is filled with narrowboats, some of which are moored along the banks. In the background, there are modern residential buildings with balconies and large windows. The scene is framed by lush green trees on both sides. A white text box with a thin border is centered over the image, containing the title. Below the title, the subtitle is written in white text.

# MOORING IN THE “SAFETY” ZONES

NBTA London Position Paper: September 2022

## ABOUT NBTAL

We are the London branch of the National Barge Travellers Association (NBTA).

The NBTA is a volunteer organisation formed in 2009 that campaigns and provides advice for itinerant boat dwellers on Britain's inland and coastal waterways. This includes anyone whose home is a boat and who does not have a permanent mooring for their boat with planning permission for residential use.

The London branch was formed in June 2014, in recognition of the growing number of boat dwellers in the London area and due to the fact that it is often easier to organise locally than nationally.

To find out more or donate to support this campaign: [nbtalondon.wordpress.com](http://nbtalondon.wordpress.com)



# THE LAWS AND GUIDANCE ABOUT MOORING

## SUMMARY

There is no legal basis for CRT to penalise boaters (including refusing a boat licence) for mooring within a reasonable time on the 'no mooring' sites we are challenging.

We can continue to moor in these “zones” as we do in the rest of the network.

## WATERWAYS ACT & GRANTING OF A LICENCE

The 1995 Waterways act sets out how boat licenses are granted in the UK. Despite their casual threats, there are a very limited number of conditions that CRT can refuse a license. CRT cannot legally refuse to license a boat if it has Third Party insurance, a BSS certificate and the boat either has a home mooring or will be used bona fide for navigation.

## CRT GUIDANCE

The guidance that CRT presents in the boaters' handbook and mooring booklet is supposed to assist waterway users to interpret the legislation.

Guidance is a way to explain regulation – it is not the same as regulation - so we revert back to the waterways act to assess if the “safety” zones are indeed ensuring free passage or doing something else entirely.

## PUBLIC RIGHT OF NAVIGATION (PRON)

The right of navigation includes the right to moor, as stated in Halsburts Law of England 5th edition:

'The public right of navigation includes the right ... to remain for a convenient time, to load and unload, to moor and fix temporary moorings in the waterway'.

Boaters have the right to moor reasonably and lawfully without interference from an authority.



## “SAFETY” ZONES

We believe that the “Safety” zones have been designed by CRT for two reasons:

- 1: To make it harder for itinerant boaters to continue their chosen way of life.
- 2: To appease the vocal and powerful rowing club administrations whose prejudices and beliefs make them think that increased moored boats in the area badly affect their ability to enjoy their rowing activities.

At this point in time only the first phase of the “safety” zones is being implemented – CRT claim they are only implementing existing regulations.

The next phases will include a ban on double mooring in many areas leading to hundreds of spaces lost.



## SAFETY ON THE RIVER LEA

### SHARED SPACE

There are many users of the River Lea and it is the responsibility of all users to act in ways that reduce danger to all other users.

### EVIDENCE

Of the incidents that have occurred to date, there is no evidence to demonstrate that the “safety” zones would have prevented them from happening.

NBTAL POSITION

### EDUCATION

With a high turnover of boat owners, new rowers and leisure boaters, the river sees new users every year. Many of them are unaware of good practice and therefore continued education will increase safety.

### DREDGING & MAINTENANCE

Some areas of the river are poorly maintained and shallow. They require dredging which would widen the channel available to all and allow for easier passing.

# “EXISTING” RULES

CRT are claiming that the new red no mooring areas that are part of the “safety” zones all come under existing rules and regulations. This is not true. Below are some explanations why the recurring reasons CRT use are not justified, and are not based on existing rules.



Mooring on a fast-flowing section of a river is common across the network.



Mooring under high bridges where the water is wide poses no threat to navigation. Where a bridge does narrow the channel there is no need to restrict mooring on the wide approach.



There is no obligation to keep long sightlines free of moored boats for unpowered craft, these users are trained to move around larger objects.



Mooring on the outside of a bend rarely impedes navigation. There are examples of where CRT monetise such moorings.



There is no requirement for emergency service vehicles to access the water.



“Operational reasons” is a meaningless catch all phrase with no basis in existing regulation.



Mooring on the inside of a **gentle** bend does not impede navigation, and there are examples of where CRT monetise such moorings.



Where a towpath may be damaged, CRT should repair, not remove, mooring.



Claiming that an area requires a different interpretation of rules as it has a “high intensity of water space use” is just nonsense, rules should not be altered to fit a new agenda. Additionally, the areas in question are some of the widest in the whole network.

A wide-angle photograph of a public event. A large crowd of people is seated on a grassy bank next to a canal. The people are wearing colorful clothing and many are using large, colorful blankets or mats. In the background, there are several industrial buildings, including a large brick structure and a modern white building. The sky is clear and blue. A yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text 'ZONES DETAIL LOWER LEE' in yellow capital letters.

ZONES DETAIL  
LOWER LEE

LL1

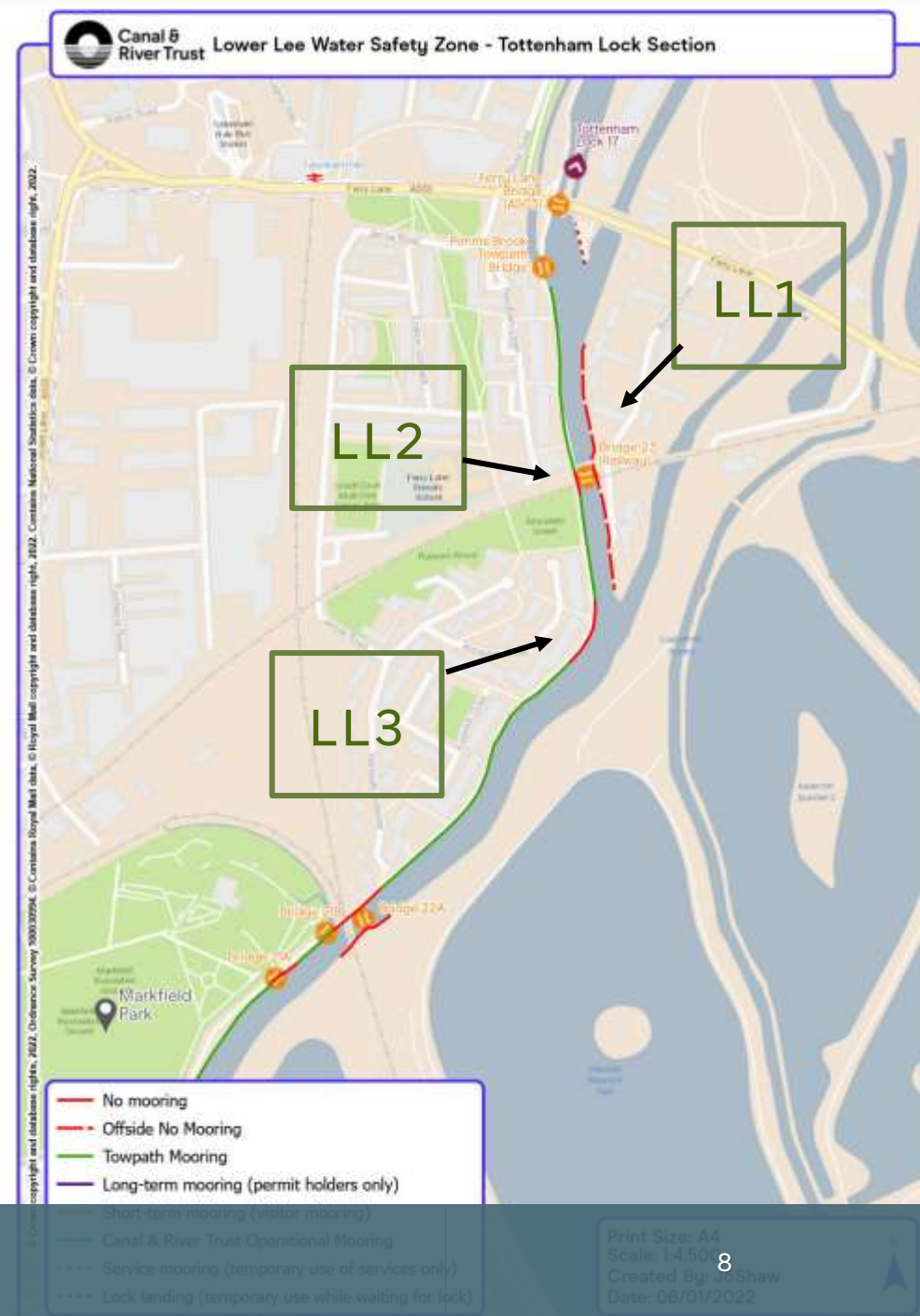
CRT Say: No Mooring – reason unclear  
NBTA position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.

LL2

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTA Position: A 10-20m no mooring zone under this low narrow bridge is appropriate. The rest of this section should not be restricted.

LL3

CRT Say: No mooring on bends  
NBTA Position: Gentle bend on a wide navigation - mooring restrictions are unnecessary





LL4

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.

NBTAL Position: High bridge with wide channel - mooring restrictions are unnecessary

LL5

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.

NBTAL position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.

LL6

CRT Say: No mooring on bends

NBTAL Position: Gentle bend on a wide navigation - mooring restrictions are unnecessary (as demonstrated by CRT authorised moorings opposite)



LL7

CRT Say: No Mooring – Rowing Club use  
NBTAI position: In the interest of compromise NBTAI will not challenge these no mooring signs.

LL8

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTAI Position: A 10-20m no mooring zone under this low narrow bridge is appropriate.

LL9

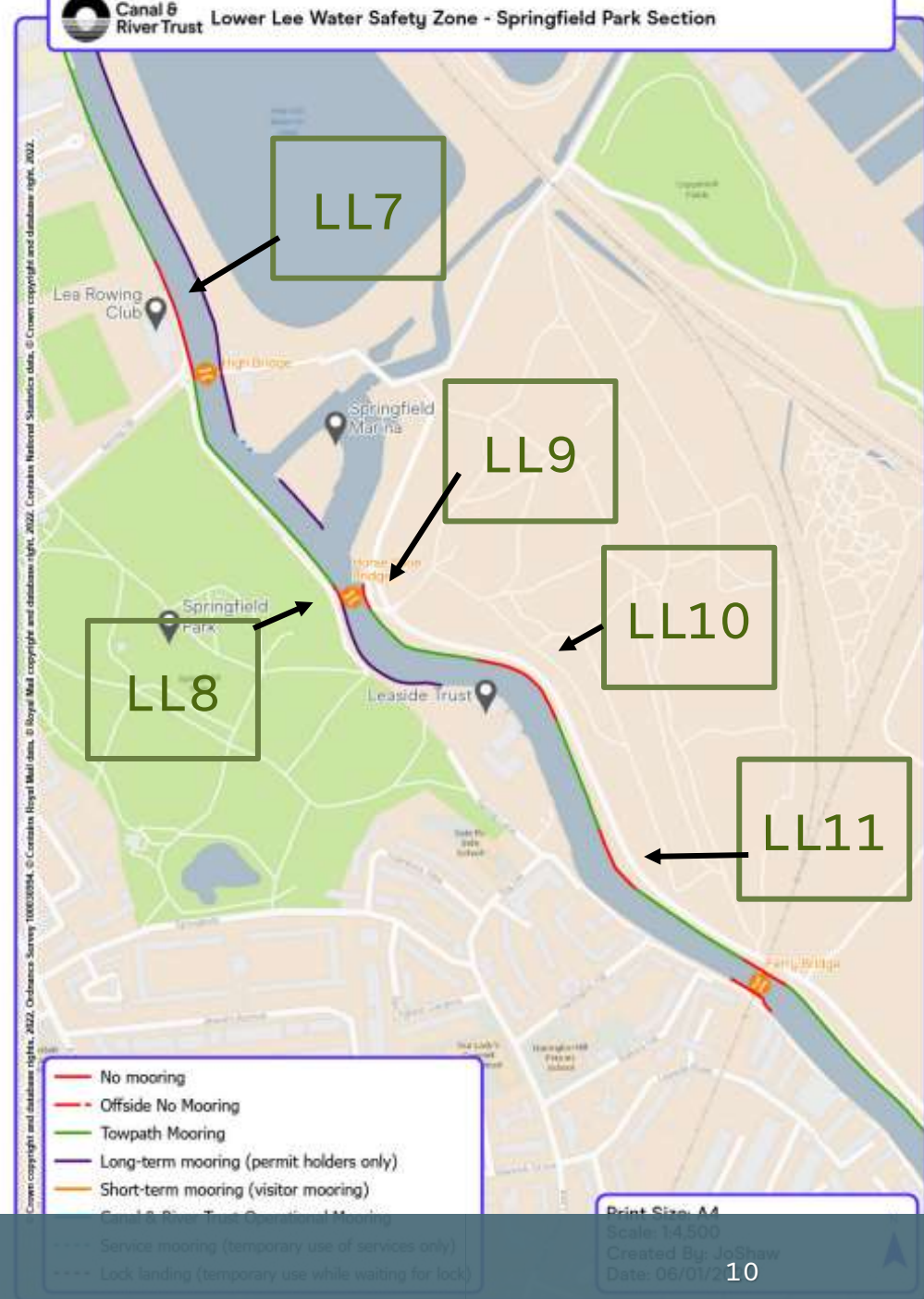
CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTAI Position: A 10-20m no mooring zone under this low narrow bridge is appropriate.

LL10

CRT Say: No Mooring – Canoe Club use  
NBTAI position: In the interest of compromise NBTAI will not challenge the length of mooring on the bend where written signs have been in place for some time.

LL11

CRT Say: No mooring on bends  
NBTAI Position: Gentle bend on a wide navigation - mooring restrictions are unnecessary



LL12

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTA Position: High bridge with wide channel - mooring restrictions are unnecessary

LL13

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTA position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.

LL14

CRT Say: No mooring on bends, fast flow and damage  
NBTA Position: Long stretch, gentle bend on a wide navigation - mooring restrictions are unnecessary.

LL15

CRT Say: No mooring on bends  
NBTA position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.



LL16

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTA position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.

LL17

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTA Position: A 10-20m no mooring zone under this low narrow bridge is appropriate. The rest of this section should not be restricted.

LL18

CRT Say: No mooring on bends  
NBTA Position: Gentle bend on a wide navigation - mooring restrictions are unnecessary

LL19

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTA Position: High bridge with wide channel - mooring restrictions are unnecessary

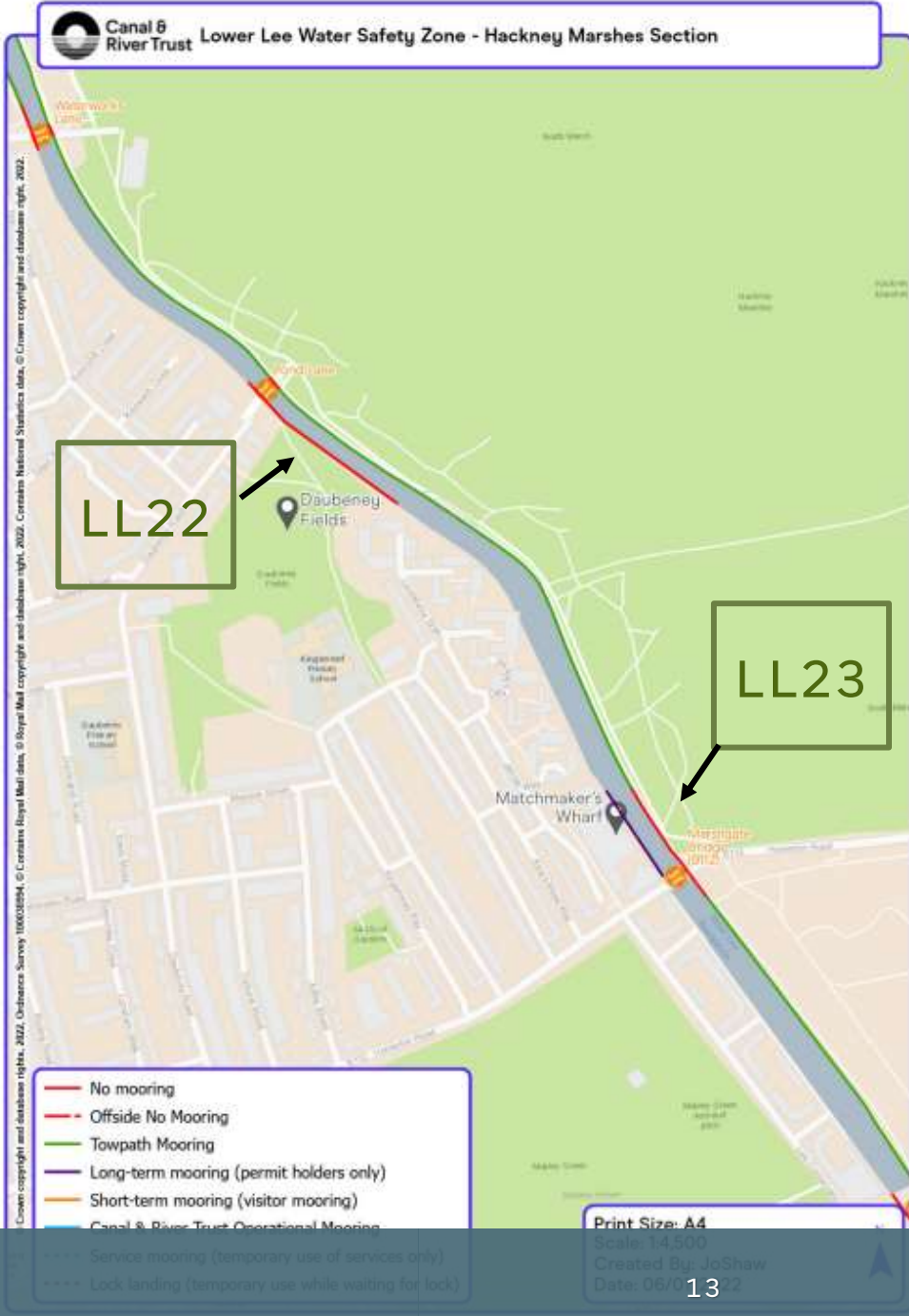


LL22

CRT Say: No Mooring – reason unclear.  
NBTA Position: No legitimate reason for mooring restrictions

LL23

CRT Say: No Mooring – offside widebeam mooring impede navigation  
NBTA Position: Plenty room to pass, no legitimate reason for mooring restrictions



LL24

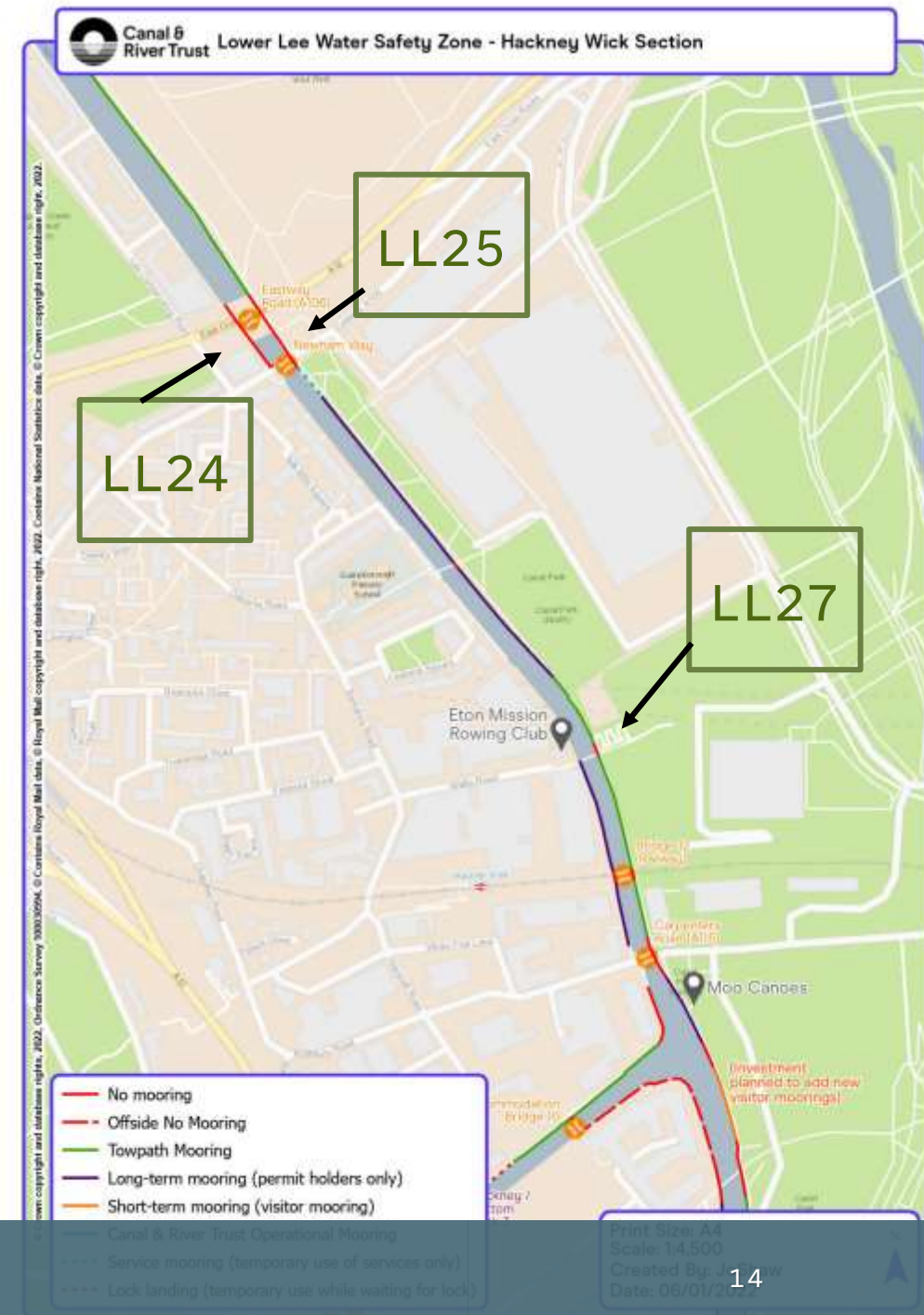
CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTA position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.

LL25

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTA Position: A 10-20m no mooring zone under the low narrow newham way bridge is appropriate. The rest of this section should not be restricted.

LL27

Following pressure from NBTA and the boating community CRT have agreed to remove this very small no-mooring section as it had no legitimate reason.



LL28

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTA Position: A 10-20m no mooring zone under the low narrow bridge only is appropriate. The rest of this section should not be restricted.

LL29

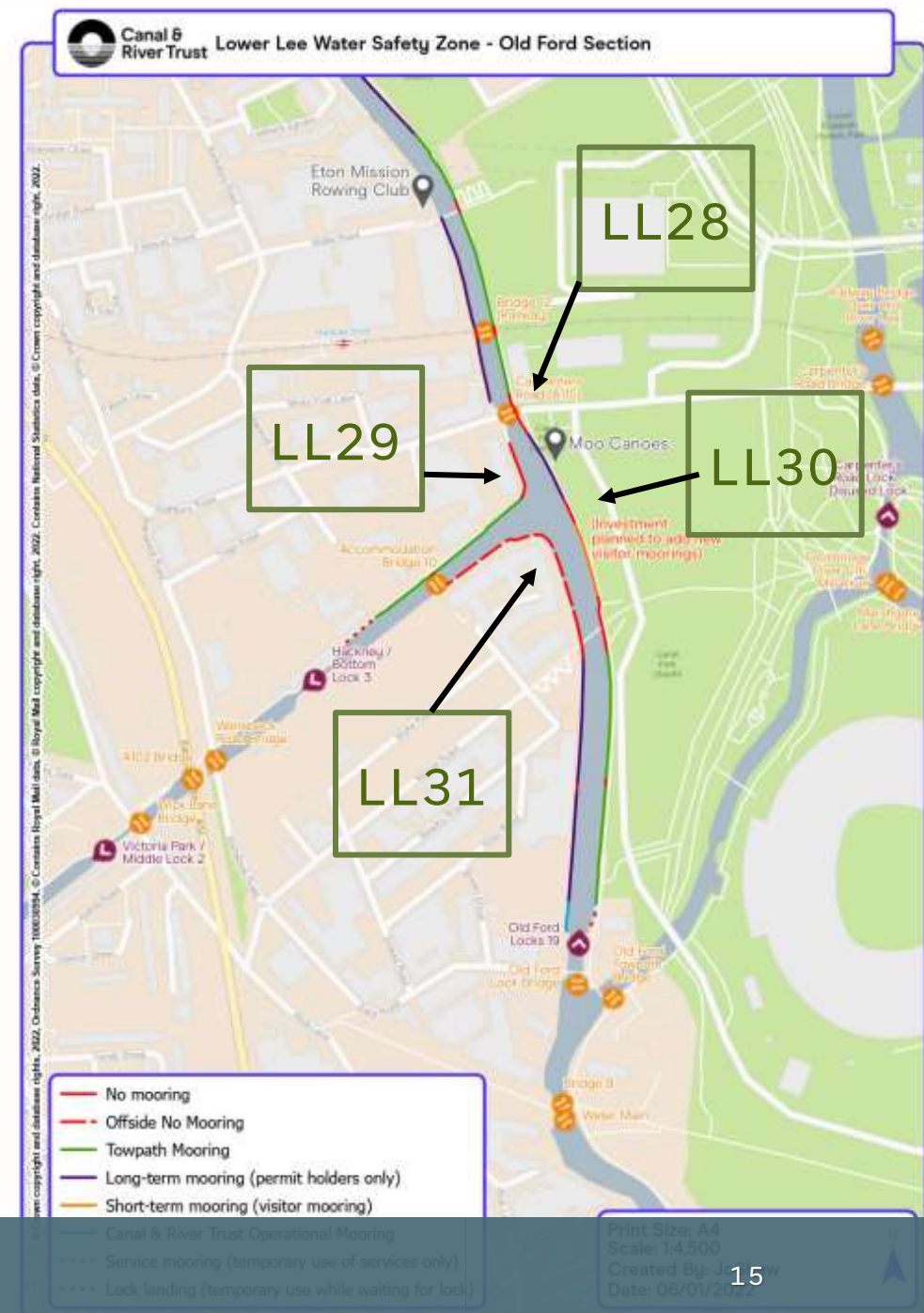
CRT Say: No mooring on bends  
NBTA Position: Very wide section of navigation - mooring restrictions are unnecessary (as demonstrated by CRT authorised Private Moorings opposite)

LL30

CRT Say: No Mooring on bends.  
NBTA position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.

LL31

CRT Say: No Mooring on bends.  
NBTA position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.

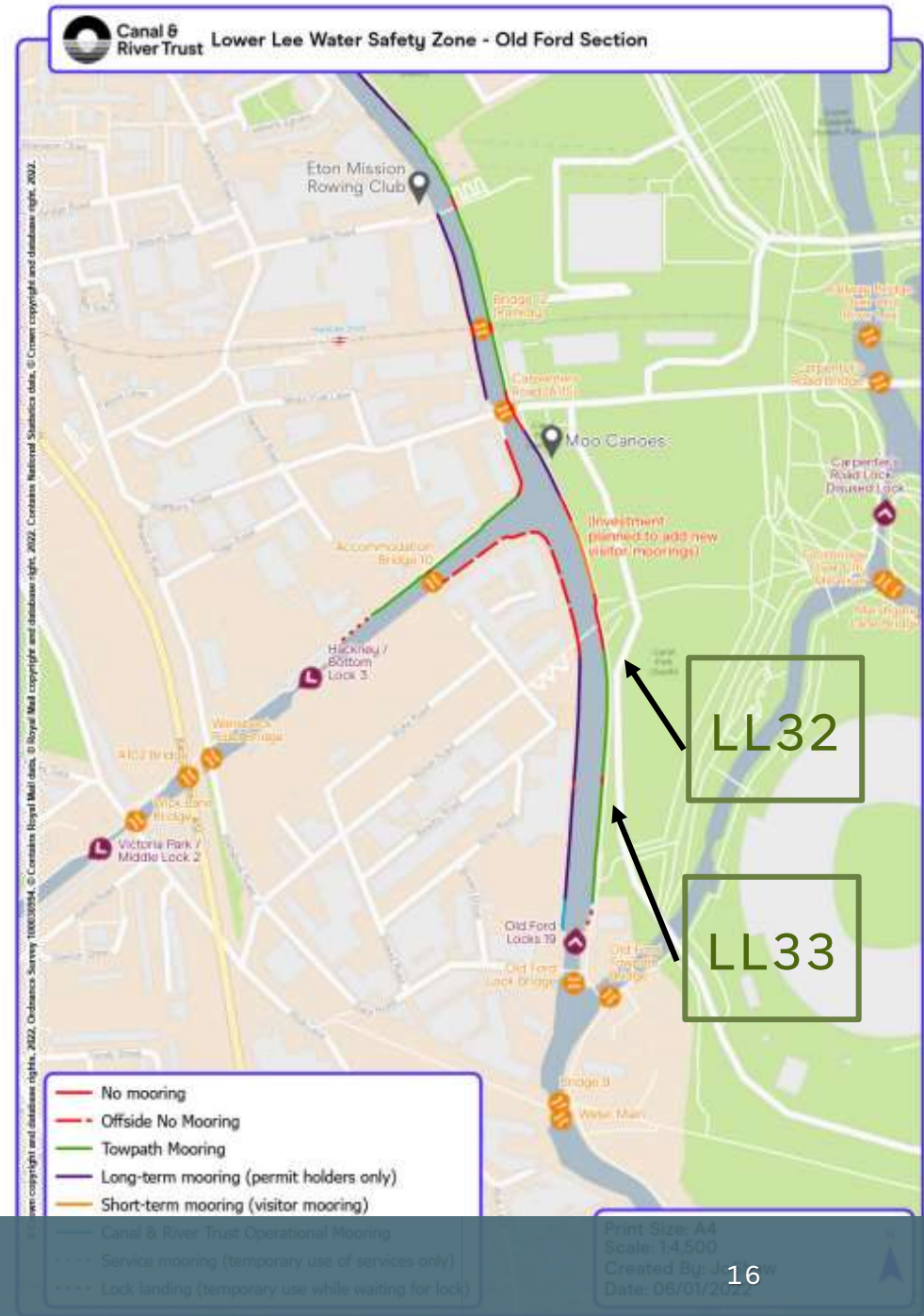


LL32

CRT Say: No Mooring near or under fixed bridges.  
NBTA Position: High bridge with wide channel - mooring restrictions are unnecessary

LL33

CRT Say: Unclear reasons  
NBTA Position: High footbridge with wide channel - mooring restrictions are unnecessary





An aerial photograph of a canal in Broxbourne, UK. The canal flows from the bottom left towards the top left. On the right bank, a large crowd of people is sitting on a grassy area, many with colorful blankets. In the background, there are industrial buildings, including a large brick structure and a modern white building. A utility pole with power lines is visible on the right. The sky is clear and blue.

# ZONES DETAIL BROXBOURNE

B1

CRT Say: No Mooring – reason unclear.  
NBTA Position: No legitimate reason for mooring restrictions

B2

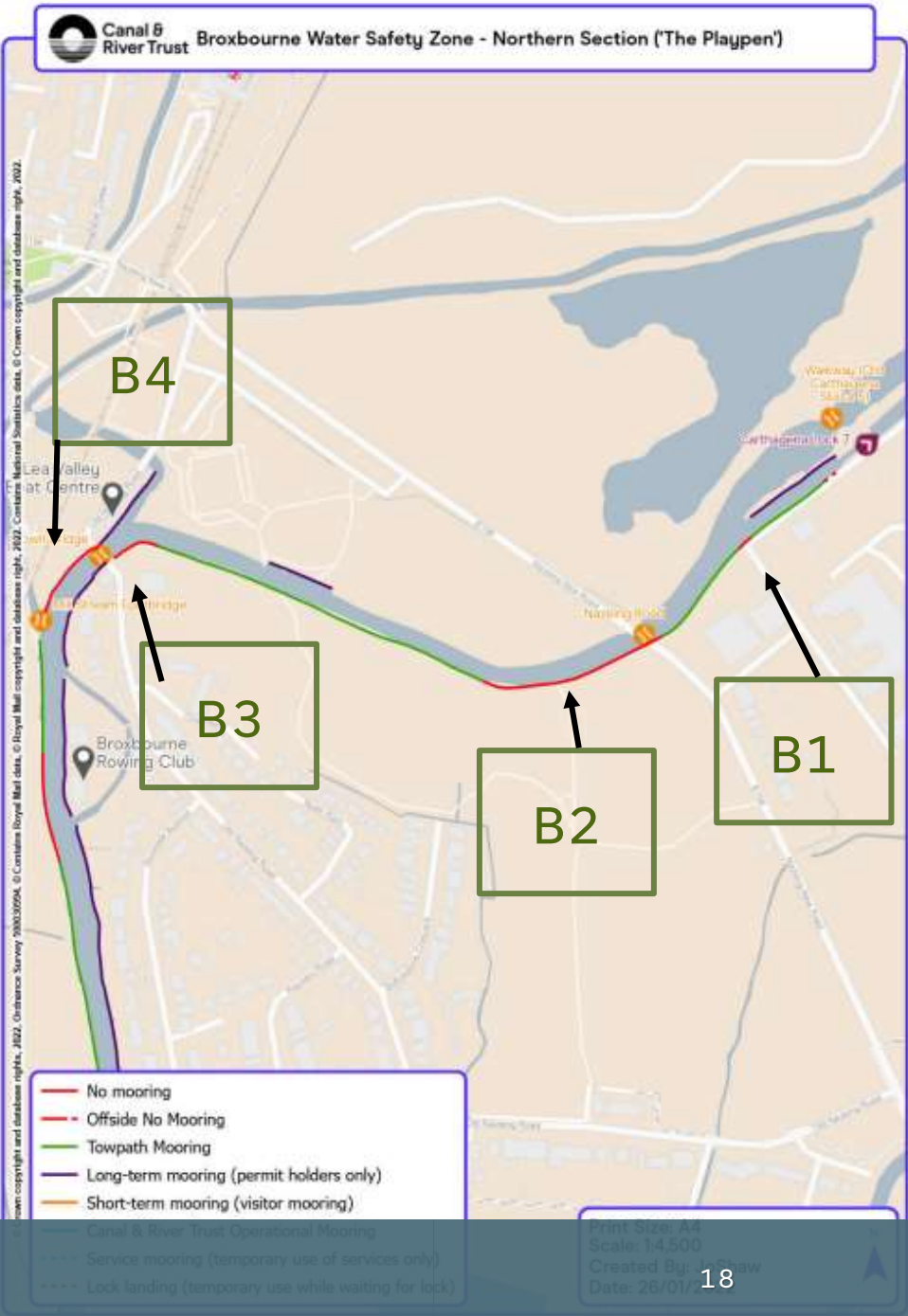
CRT Say: No mooring on bends  
NBTA Position: Gentle bend on a wide navigation - mooring restrictions are unnecessary

B3

CRT Say: No Mooring – no legitimate reason.  
NBTA position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.

B4

CRT Say: No Mooring – no legitimate reason.  
NBTA position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.

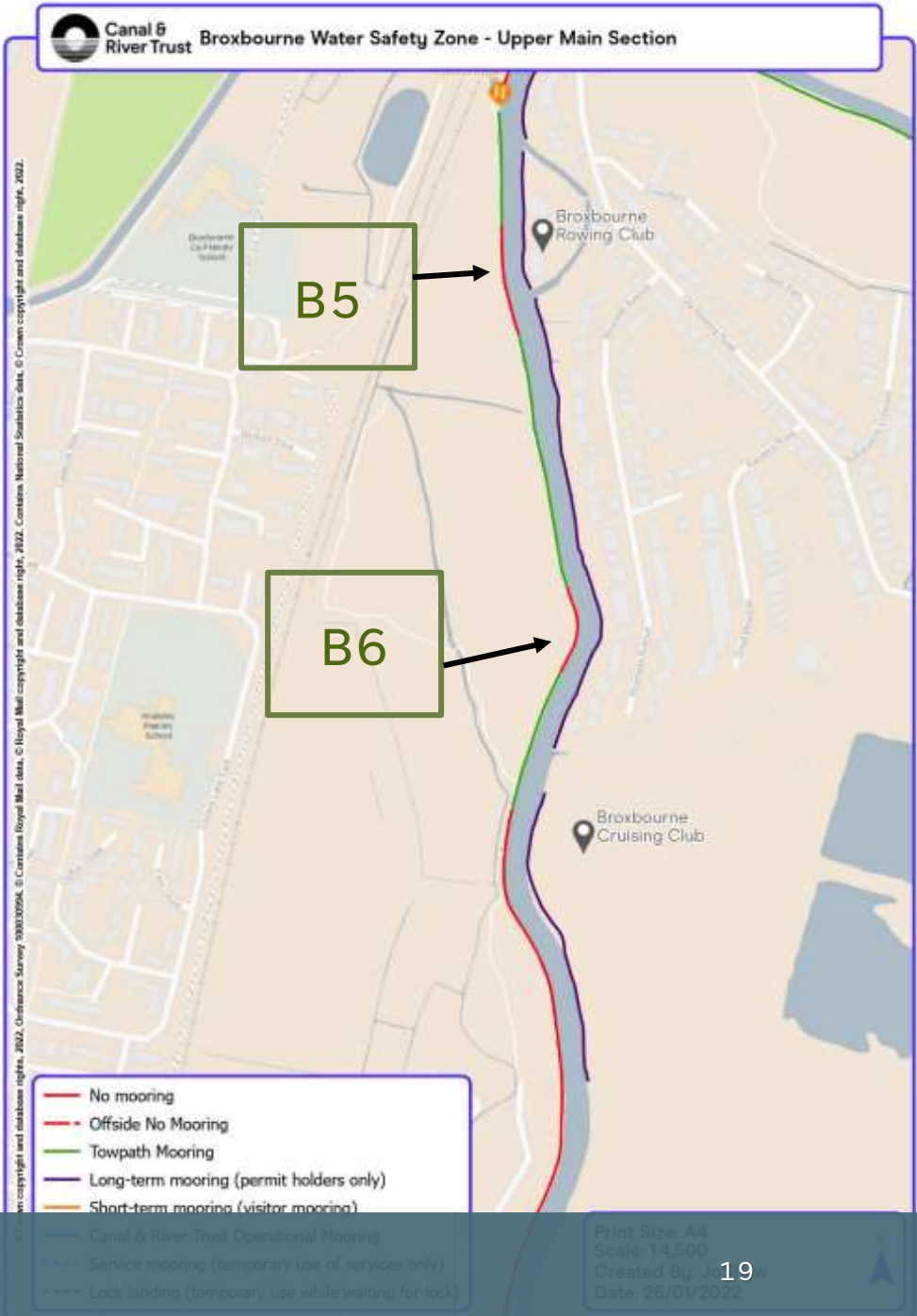


B5

CRT Say: No Mooring – “operational reasons” - reason unclear.  
NBTA Position: No legitimate reason for mooring restrictions

B6

CRT Say: No Mooring – on a bend.  
NBTA position: In the interest of compromise NBTA will not challenge these no mooring signs.



B7

CRT Say: No mooring on bends  
NBTA Position: Gentle bend on a wide navigation -  
mooring restrictions are unnecessary



B8

CRT Say: No Mooring – channel narrows.

NBTAL Position: Mooring under and just each side of the Slupe Ln Bridge will impede navigation and where the wide section of river returns near the weir is a great place to turn. We will not challenge mooring restrictions in those places within B8, however we are challenging the straight in between those places, there is no reason not to moor there because it doesn't impede navigation





## SUPPORTING BOATERS

CRT do not have the right to suspend or cancel a person's licence if they are moored legally, are not obstructing navigation, have BSS certificate and insurance.

### WARNINGS

We have draft responses for boaters to use to contest any notices they get when mooring in the "safety" zones outlined in this document.

### LEGAL SUPPORT

We offer legal support to boaters who may be taken to court, and we expect boaters will win their cases.

Contact [nbta.london.caseworker@gmail.com](mailto:nbta.london.caseworker@gmail.com)

# UNINTENDED IMPACT OF THE FAILED ATTEMPT TO IMPLEMENT “SAFETY” ZONES



## COST

Implementing and enforcing the zones is costing CRT way more money than they hoped for less return



## DAMAGED REPUTATION

Boaters and community members trust CRT to do the right thing less than they did before the zones



## UNITED COMMUNITY

Live aboard boaters are more united in their approach and more aware of their rights

A narrowboat is moored on a canal. The boat has a light blue cabin and a dark hull with white trim. The canal is surrounded by dense green trees and foliage. The sky is overcast. A white box with a green gradient background contains the text 'WHAT NEXT?'.

## WHAT NEXT?

### KEEP ENGAGING

We will continue to engage with all stakeholders to find ways of making the waterways safer that will not destroy our way of life at the same time.

### KEEP CHALLENGING

We will continue to seek answers from CRT, challenge their attempts to remove moorings and take actions to stop the cull.

### KEEP MOORING

We will continue to empower boaters to moor in areas that are safe and do not impede navigation, We will share knowledge with our communities and support those who are wrongfully punished by CRT.