



# Unlocking Community-led Moorings in Oxford

*November 2021*



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## Executive Summary

This report was commissioned by Collaborative Housing, the community- led housing hub for the Thames Valley and sponsored by Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire Community Land Trust.

The report makes a persuasive case for more moorings within Oxford and highlights the benefits of these being community -led. There are a few examples of community -led moorings emerging across the county and there has been significant interest in the concept by local boaters.

The report looks at evidence of need for moorings from Oxford City Council's own assessments, along with other sources of evidence. The Oxford Plan itself has identified a need for 41 mooring spaces but other evidence shows this need could be a lot higher for residential moorings, potentially double that figure. The report also highlights the need for greater access to temporary moorings and better services for cruising boats. The demand for moorings, at least in part, comes from a lack of other affordable housing options along with an increase in people choosing to liveaboard and a decrease in available temporary mooring sites. There is also a lack of maintenance of some sites and service points.

The researchers have carried out a survey of boaters which has given qualitative information about the issues boaters face. This has highlighted;

- A strong need for permanent residential moorings as well as winter and visitor moorings
- More access to facilities for cruisers, particularly water points, recycling and toilet waste disposal
- A need for affordable rents on moorings
- A strong interest in community led moorings

There is already policy support for delivering more moorings in the Oxford Plan which also offers planning guidance on how these should be created. The report references guidance on Environment Agency regulation as well.

The Oxford City Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment 2019 concluded that 'potential for new development to come forward in Oxford City is severely limited' and so the need for moorings does not simply come from existing boaters but could potentially offer another option for people in housing need in the city. Indeed, it could become part of the Council's review of their Housing and Homelessness Strategy as part of a number of potential options for residents seeking housing security. Moorings can be cheaper to provide than bricks and mortar but also could make use of land otherwise undevelopable due to flood risk.

The report makes the case for a community- led approach to moorings and gives examples of other initiatives nationally. There is some evidence of private moorings becoming

unaffordable through the use of auctions inflating mooring costs, as well as boaters not feeling they have sufficient control over the ways moorings are managed. Community- led moorings can offer the solution to more affordable, more secure moorings which are rooted in the local community. Boaters are likely to improve the general environment through helping to conserve biodiversity and other leisure opportunities for the wider community.

There are a number of potential sites for mooring opportunities for which the researchers have carried out some analysis. The initial sites to focus on are the mooring identified as part of Redbridge Paddock and Castle Mill Stream which is currently the subject of enforcement action against unauthorised moorings. Redbridge Paddock is the most feasible and a proper feasibility study should be carried out as a second stage to this report. The Castle Mill Stream site could potentially be redeveloped alongside the regeneration of Jericho Wharf if a way forward for the legal issues can be found. Other sites, identified in the report, could be gradually assessed as part of the next iteration of the Oxford Plan.

There are a number of options as to how the land could be transferred into community ownership:

- The land could be transferred by way of freehold or long leasehold with the community group taking on the development risk.
- Oxford City Council (through its development body) could develop the site in partnership with a community group and transfer the completed moorings site into community ownership.
- Oxford City would retain ownership, develop the site and then enter into a management agreement with a community group.

These options are further explored through considering the relationship between the potential moorings at Redbridge and a possible community- led housing scheme on the adjacent site. This would enable the sharing of facilities as well as developing a wider mixed community. The recommendation is that both developments are transferred to a Community Land Trust thereby protecting the site for the community and the Trust then entering into leasehold agreements with the land based and moorings groups with a further joint leasehold for the shared spaces

The report identifies the range of factors that would need to be considered as part of a feasibility report including capacity of sites for moorings, the range of facilities needed, the potential for income from fees as well as the costs related to a community- led group being established. The scope of this feasibility should be agreed with Oxford City Council.

There are a variety of ways a community-led moorings development can be funded, and these are outlined in the report. The next steps for developing the ideas in the report are:

- Undertake a full feasibility of the Redbridge site including early survey work and planning considerations
- Agree the mechanism by which the development can be transferred to a community land trust
- Set up a Boaters Group who can act as the facilitating group for the development (Collaborative Housing Hub would be willing to support the development of such a group)

- Transfer the land and achieve a planning consent for the moorings site.

### **Summary of key recommendations**

1. Consider undertaking a further boat count to verify current numbers of moorings/boaters
2. Explore a cross agency approach to consider how facilities for boaters could be improved
3. Facilitate a 'Boaters Group' as an accountable body who could be engaged in advocacy and the co-design of new development opportunities
4. Consider the role of moorings as part of the housing strategy as an affordable housing option for some
5. Ensure new moorings adhere to best practice guidelines and are sustainable with low impact on biodiversity
6. Undertake further feasibility work and delivery plan on the proposed mooring site at Redbridge Paddocks site as a community-led opportunity
7. Consider how existing unregulated moorings, could be made into permanent regulated moorings through a collaborative approach with relevant stakeholders
8. Consider other sites for identified in the report for inclusion in the next iteration of the local plan

## **1. Introduction**

This report was commissioned by [Collaborative Housing](#), a hub established to support the development of a pipeline of community-led housing projects across the Thames Valley (Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire).

The report was financially supported by Oxford City Council Housing Team and [Oxfordshire Community Land Trust](#), a Community Benefit Society working to acquire and manage land for community use in Oxfordshire.

The researchers were Alice Hemming and Richard Howlett, who are freelance facilitators and advisors with expertise and experience in co-operative development. Richard has until recently lived on a boat in Oxford for 4 years and has provided support to a boater's co-operative in London. Alice lives in a housing co-operative and has worked in the community-led housing sector for 6 years.

The primary audience for the report is the Oxford City Council Housing Team and Waterways Officer/s, as well as other land-owners and stakeholders including the Jericho Wharf Trust, Oxford University Colleges, Canal & River Trust and The Environment Agency.

The concept of community-owned moorings is relatively new in the UK and as far as we know there hasn't before been any comprehensive piece of work presenting the case for this model. Therefore, we hope the research report will also be shared widely and will support the development of a national movement.

## 2. Review of current situation & future needs on Oxford's waterways

### 2.1 Assessments of needs

#### 2.1.1 Residential boaters and moorings in Oxford

There have been a number of attempts to over the past few years to quantify the number of boaters within Oxford waterways at any particular time. These are as follows:

##### **i) Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment (2018)**

In 2018, Oxford City Council commissioned and published a Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment for the Oxford Local Plan 2016 to 2036<sup>1</sup>.

##### **ii) Oxford City Council Boat Count (2019)**

More recently, the Oxford City Council's Waterways Officer undertook a "boat count" exercise in May 2019, where they used official data on residential moorings in the city as well as visual inspections and enquiries.

##### **iii) Info from other stakeholders**

**National Barge Travellers Association** - In a consultation submission in August 2017 to Oxford City Council's draft Local Plan 2016 - 2036<sup>2</sup>,

The findings of these reports can be summarised as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> *Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment*, Oxford City Council (2018): [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5133/oxford\\_boat\\_dwellers\\_accommodation\\_needs\\_assessment](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5133/oxford_boat_dwellers_accommodation_needs_assessment)

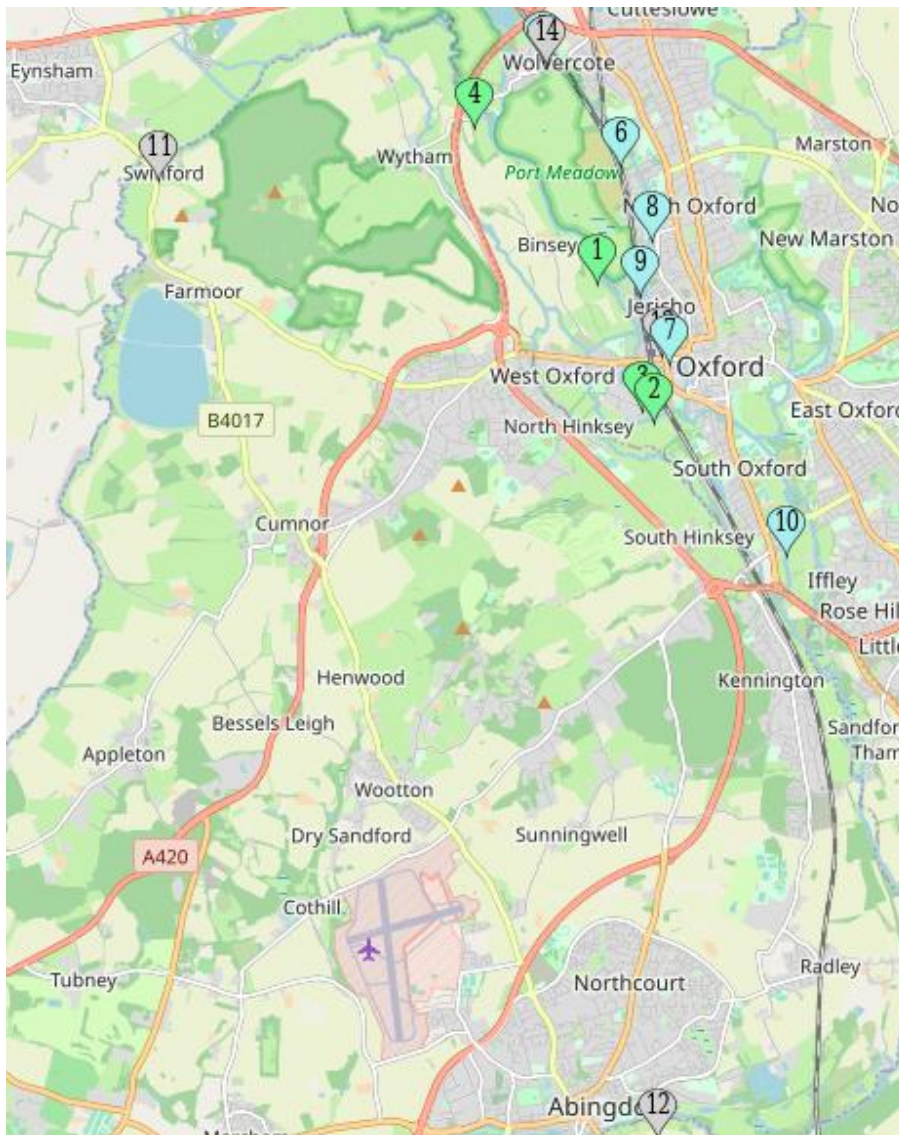
<sup>2</sup> *Oxford City Council Draft Local Plan 2016 – 2036 Consultation Submission*, The National Barge Travellers Association (2017), [https://www.bargee-traveller.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2017-08-25\\_NBTA\\_response-OCC\\_draft\\_Local\\_Plan\\_consultation.pdf](https://www.bargee-traveller.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2017-08-25_NBTA_response-OCC_draft_Local_Plan_consultation.pdf)

|   | <b>Boat Dwellers<br/>Accommodation<br/>Needs<br/>Assessment</b> | <b>OCC<br/>Boat<br/>Count</b> | <b>National<br/>Bargee<br/>Travellers<br/>Association</b> | <b>Canal<br/>&amp; River<br/>Trust<sup>3</sup></b> |
|---|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Moorings spaces with planning permission for permanent residency</b>   |   |                               |   |  |
| <b>Number owned by Canal and River Trust</b><br>(on Oxford Canal across 3 locations: Hythe Bridge Street and 2 X Agenda 21)   | 67  | 59                            | -   | -  |
| <b>Number owned privately</b><br>(on Oxford Canal and River Thames across 4 locations: Aristotle House, Bossoms Marina, Donnington Bridge, Walton Bridge)   | 22  | 30                            | -   | -  |
| <b>Other moorings &amp; cruisers</b>  |   |                               |   |  |
| <b>Number of unregulated/unauthorised moorings</b><br>or those with unclear status as moorings  | 42 locations*   | 13‡                           | -   | -  |
| <b>Number of continuous cruisers</b>  | 100†  | 87§                           | -   | 18   |
| <b>Total living aboard on Oxford's Waterways</b>  | <b>189</b>  | <b>189</b>                    | <b>500  </b>  | -  |
| <p><b>Notes to table</b> - It is difficult to compare the findings of each report as they sometimes confuse mooring spaces with mooring locations. They also include numbers of cruisers and number of unregulated moorings within the same figure although these are different – some explanations of the figures are below:</p> <p>* This does not specify a number of actual moorings within these places</p> <p>† They include “unauthorised moorings and constant cruisers” in this figure</p> <p>‡ These are described as continuous cruisers “settled” in unregulated moorings</p> <p>§ The majority of these (63) were on temporary moorings on the River Thames</p> <p>   Estimate of 200 boats in total including on moorings with permission, cruisers or on unregulated mooring. Plus an additional 300 bargee travellers who may enter the City Council area</p> |   |                               |   |  |

This shows there is still some uncertainty about the numbers of unregulated moorings, together with the need which largely depends on the number of people who are cruising who may want permanent moorings in the City if they were available.

<sup>3</sup> Cited in *Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment*, Oxford City Council (2018)

**Map 1: Current moorings and services in Oxford**



- Legend:**
- Leisure Marinas (green pins):**
1. Bossoms Boatyard
  2. Osney Marina
  3. Osney Mill Marina
  4. Godstow Bridge
- Residential Moorings (blue pins):**
5. Agenda 21 (CRT)
  6. Agenda 21 (CRT)
  7. Hythe Bridge (CRT)
  8. Aristotle House (Private)
  9. Walton Bridge Moorings (Private)
  10. Donnington Bridge (Private)
- Services (grey pins):**
11. Eynsham Lock Services - River
  12. Abingdon Lock Services - River
  13. Hythe Bridge Services - Canal
  14. Agenda 21 Services - Canal

[View interactive map online here](#) (Map source: OpenStreetMap)

**iv) Analysis of Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment**

The Boat Dwellers accommodation needs assessment concluded that **41** permanent residential moorings are needed over the next 20 years. This is based on a proportion of those boaters identified on unauthorised moorings that may want to move to permanent moorings. However, the more recent Oxford City Council boat count in 2019 suggested the number of boats on unauthorised moorings was at least 80. Therefore, the need for permanent residential moorings could now be at least 75 based on this proportion.

The figure of 41 does not account for any continuous cruisers using temporary moorings, who may want to transfer to permanent moorings, although elsewhere in the needs assessment it states that stakeholders suggest that up to ‘50 continuous cruisers have need for permanent accommodation in the study area with the remainder preferring to remain transient’ (equivalent to 50% of total estimated continuous cruisers). If the number of



continuous cruisers are, as some stakeholders suggest, up to 300, then the proportion of those with a need for permanent moorings could be higher than the estimate suggests.

The needs assessment also disregards the 40 boaters on a waiting list for permanent residential moorings at one marina. As part of our research, contact with one non-residential Oxford marina was made in Summer 2021, who said they have regular enquiries for residential moorings. There are only 80 metres of winter moorings (roughly accommodating between 4 - 6 boats of average size) within Oxford city on the canal. These can be rented for up to 4 months, on a first come first served basis. When the Canal & River Trust released these for sale in October 2021, it was reported anecdotally that they were all rented within 5 minutes. The Boat Dwellers Needs Assessment report also said there was a: “need for relevant agencies to consider more flexibility in relation to temporary moorings, particularly during winter months, and to consider increasing the number of temporary moorings”. This suggests that there is a demand for more longer-term and permanent moorings.

The Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment concluded that there was “general agreement that there is a lack of space and suitable locations for moorings on Oxford’s waterways”. They suggested this pressure on moorings for residential use was due to:

- An increase in demand / people living on boats due to unaffordability of housing in Oxford (see section 2.2.4)
- An increase in visitor leisure boats during the summer months. This led to increased demand for temporary mooring spaces particularly close to the city centre which were otherwise used by continuous cruisers
- Lack of maintenance of the waterways, poor condition of the banks and limited availability of rings / pins, making some moorings inaccessible
- Lack of flexibility from authorities in relation to the amount of time that continuous cruisers can spend at temporary moorings.

Additionally, in recent years, regulatory authorities have taken a stricter enforcement approach to moorings, leading to increased pressure, for example:

- The Canal & River Trust requirements for minimum travel range on the canal which can be enforced by penalties
- Oxford City Council removing previously unregulated moorings such as those on the river between Port Meadow and the Botley Road
- The Environment Agency recently announcing its intention to issue fines for overstaying and increasing fees for longer-term use of visitor moorings on the Thames, as well as turning “wild moorings” or previously unregulated spaces into paid moorings<sup>4</sup>
- Policies or lobbying groups attempting to criminalise or restrict activity associated with boat dwelling, for example the proposed Public Space Protection Order in 2017<sup>5</sup>

Anecdotally, it seems the increased regulation has pushed some continuous cruisers to move onto permanent moorings, further decreasing availability. It also means that there are fewer temporary places or more difficult conditions for continuous cruisers to moor if they

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<sup>4</sup> *Boater Briefing*, Environment Agency (September 2021):  
[https://www.facebook.com/143716172886829/photos/a.713443452580762/1072784106646693/?\\_tn\\_=%2CO\\*F](https://www.facebook.com/143716172886829/photos/a.713443452580762/1072784106646693/?_tn_=%2CO*F)

<sup>5</sup> See: <https://www.bargee-traveller.org.uk/victory-as-oxford-city-council-drops-waterways-pspo-but-boaters-remain-vigilant/>

wish to remain close to the city or cannot afford to pay ongoing fees for staying in temporary leisure moorings.

### 2.1.2 Trends in residential moorings

According to the Canal & River Trust there are more boats on our canals now than at the height of the industrial revolution. In March 2021, there were 35,130 people with boat licences for rivers and canals managed by the Canal & River Trust in England and Wales, which is an increase from 34,435 in 2020 and 32,490 in 2012. Although there is no official figure of how many people live on the waterways, the Canal & River Trust estimates the proportion of “liveaboard” boats at around 25% (a rise from 15% in 2011) nationally<sup>6</sup>.

However, this figure doesn't include other waterways including the river Thames which falls under the remit of the Environment Agency. It was cited in a report to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways General Meeting in 2021 that estimates of the total number of people living on the waterways across the UK range from 15,000 – 50,000<sup>7</sup>.

There are some suggestions that this increase is due to the prohibitive costs of bricks and mortar homeownership and boats being seen as an alternative to renting and a cheaper way of getting on the property 'ladder'. According to Promarine Finance, a mortgage lender for boats, finance deals for homes on boats have increased by nearly 40 per cent in the last year, mostly accessed by a younger demographic<sup>8</sup>. Additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic and 'lock down' restrictions, may be a cause for increased demand for liveaboard boats. Riverhomes a waterside property company said that houseboat sales had been up 880% since the restrictions had lifted in Spring 2021 compared to last year<sup>9</sup>.

Because the information available on rates of growth of liveaboard boaters in Oxford is patchy, it is useful to compare to the situation in London, given the similarities in the unaffordability of housing relative to wages. Between 2010 and 2019 there was an increase in the number of boats in London from 2,101 to 4,271. The percentage of these that were continuous cruisers (presumed liveaboard) increased from 19.7% to 52%<sup>10</sup>.

### 2.1.3 Services & conditions on Oxford's waterways

This section has been compiled from information from the Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment (2018), our community-led moorings survey, conversations / meetings with boaters conducted by the researchers and publicly available information from stakeholders.

Whilst there has been an effort as part of this report to draw generalisations, people living on Oxford's waterways are a broad and diverse group, with different reasons for living on boats so there will be varied needs and opinions.

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<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/30/more-boats-on-canals-and-rivers-than-in-18th-century-as-thousands-opt-for-life-afloat>

<sup>7</sup> 'Living on the Waterways' (see above)

<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/mortgageshome/article-9672571/Are-houseboats-property-boom-count-cost-riverside-living.html>

<sup>9</sup> See <https://inews.co.uk/news/long-reads/england-canal-waterways-life-covid-pandemic-boater-for-life-1009389>

<sup>10</sup> See <https://inews.co.uk/news/long-reads/england-canal-waterways-life-covid-pandemic-boater-for-life-1009389>

Those living on the waterways have cited the many attractions to this lifestyle including the community, being close to nature, the freedom to travel, affordability and ability to live alone.

However, there were four main areas where there was board agreement about the conditions and challenges experienced:

### **i) Access to Services**

The Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment and other sources have highlighted the general lack of services and facilities in the city including:

- Those with permanent moorings on the canal or who maintain a licence with the Canal & River Trust to continuously cruise on the canal have access to water points, elsan toilet disposal, household waste disposal, and in some places, electricity hook-up. However, in most cases, these are shared facilities and boaters will need to move their boats to access these facilities.
- Those who only maintain a licence with the Environment Agency to continuously cruise on the river Thames and don't have a permanent residential mooring on the river, which is serviced, have **no services on the river within the city boundaries**. The closest Environment Agency maintained services are in Abingdon or Eynsham, which means that boaters need to travel for multiple hours to access water and dispose of toilet and household waste. Some marinas do provide these services but charge a fee.
- With the closure of Jericho boatyard in 2006, there has been a lack of maintenance facilities within the city, the nearest boatyards for professional services being in Eynsham on the river or Enslow on the canal. For many, the costs of professional services are prohibitively expensive. There are no places in the city where liveaboard boaters can take their boat to carry out DIY work affordably and safely with access to power, as marinas in the city with these facilities are primarily for non-liveaboard boats.

See also Map 1 above for locations of services.

### **ii) Affordability and security**

It is clear that in places where renting and buying housing has become increasingly unaffordable, many people choose to live on boats as a more affordable alternative.

In a recent survey by the Canal & River Trust of 1323 liveaboard boaters in London, 50% of said that affordability / financial reasons was a motivation for living on a boat<sup>11</sup>. Some boat dwellers consulted as part of the Boat Dwellers Needs Assessment stated that they reside on boats due to a lack of affordable housing in Oxford.

Although there is no publicly available data about the cost of existing permanent residential moorings in Oxford, due to its commercial sensitivity, there is anecdotal evidence and national data which shows that the cost of moorings have been increasing rapidly over

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<sup>11</sup> 'Who's on London's Boats survey – summary report', The Canal & River Trust (2016): <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/original/30901-whos-on-londons-boats-survey-summary-report.pdf>

recent years. A BBC feature on an Oxford liveaboard boater estimated they spent £257.44 per month in fees for a permanent mooring and boat licence fees<sup>12</sup>.

Nationally, residential mooring fees with the Canal & River Trust can range from £2,000 to £20,000 a year<sup>13</sup>. In April 2021, the CRT increased its mooring fees nationally by 2% as part of the annual price review<sup>14</sup>. However, in recent years there have been higher increases regionally. For example, in London in 2018, mooring fees with the CRT increased by 89%<sup>15</sup>.

There has been criticism nationally of the Canal & River Trust's approach to auctioning moorings, suggesting that the process of setting a reserve price is not transparent and artificially inflates prices<sup>16</sup>. The unfairness of allocations was directly critiqued by the London Assembly Environment Committee: "The CRT auctions [are] creating a market that can drive up prices at times and places of high demand. It could be fairer [...] to give priority to users who have waited a long time, used the waterway extensively, or contributed to the usage or upkeep of the waterway"<sup>17</sup>. The Residential Boat Owners Association also reported that the practice often "excludes access for those less well off"<sup>18</sup>. It was reported in the Boat Dwellers Needs Assessment that in Oxford, this practice has meant moorings have "sometimes been allocated to buyers from outside the local area who could afford the relatively high auction prices".

The popularity of articles in property media (see section 2.2.3) describing boats as a cheap investment alternative to bricks and mortar, devalues the history and culture connected to living and working on the waterways and signals the increasing gentrification of liveaboard boating. Recently there have been trends in boating communities being cleared from more desirable areas, in what some are describing as 'social cleansing'<sup>19</sup>.

The Boat Dwellers Needs Assessment reports that "a lack of affordable housing in Oxford means that homeless people or people with mental health or substance misuse issues are more likely to seek alternative accommodation on Oxford's waterways. The conditions of boats [are] very poor and unfit for human habitation" and concludes that "many of these boat dwellers may be better accommodated in affordable housing but may require help and support to do so". Whilst this may be the case for some, more research is needed to clarify the numbers of people living on boats who would prefer to live in housing if this was supported housing or provided affordably.

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<sup>12</sup> See: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-50558948>

<sup>13</sup> See: <https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/mortgageshome/article-9672571/Are-houseboats-property-boom-count-cost-riverside-living.html>

<sup>14</sup> See <https://www.watersidemoorings.com/News/View/54/mooring-prices-2021-22>

<sup>15</sup> See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/jul/15/boat-dwellers-priced-off-londons-canal-as-mooring-fees-soar>

<sup>16</sup> See petition here: <https://kanda.boatingcommunity.org.uk/crt-moorings-consultation-sparks-angry-petition/>

<sup>17</sup> 'Moor or less: Moorings on London's waterways', London Assembly Environment Committee (2013): [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla\\_migrate\\_files\\_destination/Moorings%20report%20agreement%20draft%20FIN%20AL.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_migrate_files_destination/Moorings%20report%20agreement%20draft%20FIN%20AL.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> 'Living on the Waterways', All Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways General Meeting (2021): <https://waterways.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/APPGW-June-2021-Living-on-the-Water-minutes.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> See <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/13/london-boat-dwellers-protest-against-plans-to-drive-them-from-their-homes>

However, it is also important not to overlook individual choice and agency or attribute the situation as purely due to lack of affordable housing or support for accessing it, as for many, living on a boat is an active lifestyle choice. The issue could instead be said to be due to the lack of access to funds and services to enable those who choose to liveaboard to maintain adequate standards of living.

The lack of 'regularised' or formalised moorings in many places undoubtedly leads to exploitation by landlords and landowners and leads housing insecurity. There are many reports of people living without any formalised agreements on sub-let boats or "houseboat slums"<sup>20</sup> or on moorings without permission for residential use<sup>21</sup>. This puts those people at risk of eviction or enforcement action and unable to advocate for better services. However, there will also be many liveaboard boaters who would not want more officialised moorings for many reasons including, distrust or fear of authorities, risk of enforcement action if they are identified and not having the ability to pay for moorings.

It is also useful to reference the situation in London. According to a survey done in 2016 by the Canal & River Trust, 50% of those surveyed had been living on boats on London's waterways for three years or less<sup>22</sup>. The National Boating Manager of the Canal & River Trust, in a report to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways, also referenced that liveaboard boating is a short-term option for many resulting in a high churn in places like London, with most living on boats for an average of 2-3 years. A potential reason given for high turnover is that infrastructure and facilities were often not designed for such high levels of permanent residential use<sup>23</sup>. One might also assume that people are more likely to move on land if there are low levels of longer-term security given previously cited issues of increasingly expensive residential moorings and stricter restrictions on continuous cruising.

### **iii) Autonomy and Democracy**

The underfunding of the Canal & River Trust and Environment Agency<sup>24</sup> has meant that services and infrastructure on the waterways are often under-resourced or patchy. There are few opportunities for boaters to input into decisions about how resources are used or any autonomy to source or manage their own infrastructure.

The results of the Canal & River Trust annual Boater Satisfaction Survey found a decrease in general satisfaction to 54% in 2021 following a long-term downward trend in satisfaction. Reasons cited were dissatisfaction with upkeep and maintenance, a perceived lack of transparency on how the trust uses resources and the de-prioritisation of boaters over other waterway's users. For example, 42% respondents disagreed that the trust valued the views of boat dwellers.

In a meeting of the researcher with boaters from one residential mooring in Oxford, boaters reported feeling that various authorities didn't adequately communicate or consult with them about changes to terms or planned works on the towpath. They felt there were few

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<sup>20</sup> See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/feb/23/london-houseboat-slum-rents-bergs>

<sup>21</sup> See <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/myck-djurberg-houseboat-tycoon-accused-ps3m-fraud-a4478691.html>

<sup>22</sup> 'Who's on London's Boats survey – summary report', The Canal & River Trust (2016): <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/original/30901-whos-on-londons-boats-survey-summary-report.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> 'Living on the Waterways' (as above)

<sup>24</sup> See <https://waterways.org.uk/campaigns/listing/funding-for-uk-canal-and-rivers>

opportunities to be able to have a say or be involved in processes that affected them. These boaters also acknowledged the advantages of organising within their community in order to have a collective voice and advocate for themselves in decisions around the management of their moorings.

#### 2.1.4 Housing need in Oxford

Oxford is regularly cited as one of the least affordable places for housing in the country. In 2019 the Office for National Statistics found the median house price was £395,000, which is 12.55 times median gross earnings (£31,472) in the city. Comparatively, across England the median house price is 7.83 times median earnings. The Office for National Statistics also found that the median rent for a three-bedroom home was £1,500 a month compared to a median rent of £795 in England as a whole<sup>25</sup>.

The lack of affordable housing is driving high levels of homelessness and housing insecurity in the city. In 2018, over 100 households per month approached the Council as homeless and street counts of rough sleepers also show high and sustained levels of rough sleeping in the city<sup>26</sup>. There are currently 2,355 households on the council's housing waiting list<sup>27</sup>.

The Oxford City Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment identifies that between 24,000 and 32,000 homes are needed to meet housing need in Oxfordshire between 2011 and 2031<sup>28</sup>.

Moorings could provide an alternative housing option for those not able to find appropriate housing in Oxford.

#### 2.1.5 Community-led moorings organising and survey 2020 - 21

##### **i) Community-organising work**

Collaborative Housing was approached by two groups of boaters interested in getting support to develop alternative ownership models for moorings following potential evictions from informal sites and dissatisfaction with the management of private moorings. Support was given by staff of the Collaborative Housing Hub and Oxfordshire Community Land Trust, including facilitating meetings with these groups to look at their needs and feasibility of community-led approaches.

Following this interest, The Community Land Trust organised an event with presentations from Surge Coop and Calderdale Boat Coop, two projects in the UK who were establishing community-owned moorings. The event was extremely popular and was attended by 38 participants, the majority of whom were boaters in Oxford, demonstrating the clear interest from boaters and other stakeholders alike.

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<sup>25</sup> See

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/1762/oxford-city-housing-ltd-the-journey-of-a-thousand-miles-begins-with-one-step>

<sup>26</sup> *Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-2021*, Oxford City Council:

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/4521/housing-and-homelessness-strategy-2018-21.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> See

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/1762/oxford-city-housing-ltd-the-journey-of-a-thousand-miles-begins-with-one-step>

<sup>28</sup> See <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20201/oxford-growth-strategy/763/oxford-growth-strategy>

## ii) The Survey

As part of this research, we designed a Community-led Moorings Survey to gather feedback from boaters about the need and interest in community-led moorings. The survey was publicised through known boaters Facebook groups, Whatsapp groups and on Daily Info. The survey was accepting responses for 4 weeks in Summer 2021. We had **39 responses**.

The results are summarised below. See *Appendix 1* for the full report on the survey with detailed comments.

### About the respondents:

- **26 were single person households** (67%), followed by 12 with 2 people and 1 household with 3 people.
- **35 lived on narrowboats** (90%), with 3 people on dutch barges and 1 on a widebeam
- **19 were mostly moored on the canal** (50%), 15 were mostly on the river and 5 were mostly between both
- **20 of the respondents continuously cruise** but 9 of these respondents also have other arrangements which provide moorings where they can stay longer-term at certain times including: winter moorings (3 respondents), part-time leisure mooring (3) and arrangements to use private or unregistered land (3).
- **15 respondents had permanent residential moorings**, mostly through the Canal & River Trust (12 respondents) or privately (3 respondents). **3 respondents have more precarious arrangements** - using a leisure mooring, renting the boat they live on or being on "indefinite moorings". 1 respondent has access to mooring through their job at a boatyard.
- In terms of **cruising patterns**, 5 people reported cruising across the Thames and canal, including between Banbury and Abingdon, with one person cruising as far as the Oxford / Coventry junction on the canal. 2 of these people mention staying on the canal or near Abingdon in winter (presumably because of proximity to services).

### About the conditions on Oxford's waterways:

- 3 respondents mentioned the **poor access to facilities**, especially on the river.
- 2 respondents mentioned **limited mooring spaces**, especially for cruisers.
- 1 respondent stated: "I look after my children on alternate days and it's very important that I can stay moored near where they live."

### Interest in moorings and facilities

- **31 respondents were interested in a permanent mooring** (79%). When you account for just the continuous cruisers, **17 (85%)** of those were interested in a permanent mooring. Also 12 of those interested in a permanent mooring had previously said they already had a permanent residential mooring through the CRT or on private land - this might mean either that they would intend to stay on permanent moorings or are dissatisfied with their current arrangement and would prefer another kind of permanent mooring
- **22 respondents were interested in winter moorings**. However, when you account for just the continuous cruisers **15 (75%)** were interested in winter moorings.

- **11 respondents were interested in visitor moorings**, interestingly this was roughly split between continuous cruisers (6 respondents) and those who said they had permanent moorings (5 respondents). This might mean that temporary moorings were less of a priority than more permanent moorings for continuous cruisers. It also might mean that those with permanent moorings might be more willing to cruise if there were more temporary moorings.
- **25 respondents were interested in access to facilities** but no mooring. 15 of these respondents were continuous cruisers or had another arrangement that was 'indefinite' - so 60% of continuous cruisers want more access to services. Additionally, 7 of these respondents already had existing moorings which suggests that some feel the facilities they have with their mooring are not adequate or they want additional services.
- Other interests stated were in business moorings (for an arts & craft business), a dry dock, granting leisure moorings residential status and extending existing 48-hour moorings to 14 day moorings
- The **facilities** respondents said they wanted access to ranked in order of priority (by percentage of respondents) were:
  - **Top 10:** Water point (100%); Recycling / General waste bins (97%); Elsan (85%); Food waste recycling (74%); Garden / growing space / play space (74%); Shared / community space (74%); Shared laundry facilities (72%); Postbox / postal address (72%); Temporary space for doing DIY work on boats (59%); Shed / storage (59%)
  - **Lower priorities:** Car parking (44%); Shared toilet / shower block (38%); Electric hook-up (33%); Shared Wi-Fi (26%); Pump out (23%)
  - **Other facilities mentioned:** Composting for compost toilet (8%); Secure bike shelter (8%); Disabled access; Fuel sale - diesel, gas, coal, wood; Covered areas with lines to dry washing; Renewable power plant for electric hook up; Community wood store; Dry dock or slipway access for hull maintenance; Electric car share; Sheltered outdoor seating; Hazardous waste collection - engine oil, old paint etc.; Food waste composting; Shared kitchen

### Affordability and commitment

- The **majority of respondents (90%) said an affordable rent would be under £400 per month**, with 16 of respondents saying they could pay up to £200 and 19 up to £400. 3 could pay up to £600 and only one person said they could pay up to or over £1000.
- **24 respondents (62%) said they were interested in principle to contribute time / skills** as part of a group or cooperative to set up and/or manage your own mooring. 14 said maybe and only 1 respondent said no to being interested.
- **33 respondents (85%) wanted to hear more or be linked up with other boaters interested in community-led moorings**
- Comments about interest in community-led moorings can be summarised into general themes:
  - **18** expressed positivity towards participation and **being part of a community**
  - **4** expressed positivity due to **lack of affordable alternatives** or control over housing situation
  - **4** expressed positivity due to **not feeling served** by other authorities or mooring providers



- **14** expressed uncertainty due to **personal circumstances** including choosing to cruise permanently / not be in Oxford permanently, limited time / capacity to commit or affordability of even the lowest rent
- **4** expressed uncertainty because of **potential challenges** including around group dynamics / workload, potential challenges from council or getting traction with boaters content with current conditions i.e., cruising / no mooring fees

One comment is worth including in full:

*“I have worked as an advocate for the liveaboard community (my community!) and the Gypsy and Traveller communities for the last 7 years with a number of charities both locally and nationally [...] I know how much moorings are sought after and how due to the CRT bidding policy, the people who need them most always lose out. I would like to see a well-run community mooring CIC in Oxford, much like the one in Birmingham, Urban Moorings CIC [...] The boating community has great strength and there is more strength in a unified community. Canals have become living spaces but that should be inclusive and not just for wealthy retired 'shiny' boaters! The boating community needs local hubs and support to help people be able to live on the canal and not become marginalised or forgotten. A good visible example of a community mooring project is valuable not just locally but nationally, as it can be replicated”*

## Section 2 – Conclusions and recommendations

- **There is currently a significantly limited provision of permanent residential moorings in Oxford** The need for permanent residential mooring could be over double previous estimates The OCC needs assessment in 2018 estimated a need of 41 residential moorings. However, with figures from the later count, evidence from the National Bargee Association and national trends the need could be much greater. **A new boat count could be undertaken to try to get a more accurate picture.**
- **Longer-term temporary moorings and more winter moorings are also needed alongside more permanent moorings** - With the increased number of liveaboard boaters on the waterways without permanent moorings or who choose to continuous cruise, as well as increased flooding on the river in winter there is a need for more temporary moorings allowing stays of over 48 hours. The Canal & River Trust winter moorings within Oxford city are in high demand. **A cross agency approach to creating greater flexibility for temporary and winter moorings should be explored.**
- **Access to services in the city is severely limited**, particularly water, toilet and waste disposal. **A cross agency approach to how facilities could be upgraded should be explored.**
- **A community-led approach may address some of the concerns highlighted around affordability, security, autonomy and democracy. A ‘Boaters Group’ could be facilitated as an accountable body who could be more engaged in advocacy and co-design of new development opportunities.**

### 3. Review of legal, planning and policy conditions & considerations

#### 3.1 Summary of legal and planning considerations for moorings

##### 3.1.1 The Oxford Plan & other planning considerations

###### **i) The Oxford Plan (2036)**

This includes:

- A commitment to protect existing moorings and to ‘explore opportunities to increase moorings and services’
- ‘Efforts to meet this need will include creation of new residential moorings with access to adequate services’ (3.60)
- In terms of potential sites, it states: ‘Weirs Mill Stream is one of the few locations in the city with potential for new residential moorings. These should be provided as part of the development, with access through the site to the bankside and necessary servicing provided’ (9.164)

Policy H13 (3.62) “Homes for boat dwellers” outlines criteria for new residential moorings on Oxford’s waterway and is worth including here in full:

*“Planning permission will only be granted for new residential moorings on Oxford’s waterways where all of the following criteria are met:*

- a) they do not have negative impacts on navigation and navigational safety or operational requirements of the waterway; and*
- b) the biodiversity of the water, its margins and nearby nature conservation sites will be maintained or enhanced; and*
- c) there is adequate access for emergency services to ensure safety; and*
- d) sites have adequate accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport to facilities and services including shops, healthcare, education and employment; and*
- e) there is adequate access to or provision of facilities and servicing, including water supply, electricity and disposal facilities for sewage and waste; and*
- f) use of any adjacent paths will not be impeded; and*
- g) the proposed development will not cause any adverse visual impacts or restrict the ambition for increased access to and opportunities to enjoy enhanced water related infrastructure facilities for all residents.*

*Planning permission will be granted for additional temporary visitor moorings only where residential moorings are not suitable and provided they:*

- h) do not cause environmental damage or nuisance; and*
- i) do not interfere with navigation; and*
- j) make adequate provision for refuse and sewage disposal facilities. Any new refuse and sewage disposal points should be sited so as not to detract from the canal or river scene<sup>29</sup>*

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<sup>29</sup> Oxford Local Plan 2036, Oxford City Council (2020):  
[https://www.oxford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/7380/adopted\\_oxford\\_local\\_plan\\_2036.pdf](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/7380/adopted_oxford_local_plan_2036.pdf)

The 'Implementation/ assessment method' for Policy H13 additionally requires a:

- Design & Access Statement or plans showing adequate servicing
- Evidence from EA showing no negative impacts

The Oxford Plan does not define what 'adequate' access is, so this leaves space for interpretation. In section 6 we have sought to define what we consider adequate in this context.

## **ii) Planning permissions**

Planning permissions for the development of residential moorings would be required in the following cases:

- **Carrying out of building operations** including the construction of buildings, structures or erections e.g., the placing on pontoons or facility buildings. Except where structures can be installed by the navigation authorities (or their lessees) on operational land using their respective permitted development rights.
- **Carrying out engineering or other operations** including such as the construction of a marina or a small mooring basin.
- **Carrying out a material change in the use of land** including for the residential use of the mooring (but not for the boat itself unless it is fixed to the land / unnavigable) or the extension / change of an existing boatyard or marina from leisure or business purposes to residential. Except planning permission is usually not required where the residential use of a mooring is for no more than 28 days in any calendar year, since such temporary use is permitted development under Part 4 of the General Permitted Development Order<sup>30</sup>.

## **iii) Other planning considerations**

The Oxford City Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment of 2019 was only able to identify land for 11,721 units for the Local Plan period to 2036 and concluded that: "the potential for new development to come forward in Oxford is severely limited because of the physical constraints of the city".<sup>31</sup>

Additionally, The Oxford City Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment of 2019 excluded land designated as flood zone 3 from their assessment of land suitable for development, although they did include flood zones 1 and 2 in their review. However, the assessment concluded: "there are not enough sites in Flood Zone 1 and 2 to meet identified needs"<sup>32</sup>. If designed sensitively to adapt to changing water levels, moorings could make use of flooding zone land that could not be otherwise used for bricks & mortar housing. Marinas are currently classified as "water-compatible development" and permitted in all flood risk zones in the Government guidance around permitted development and flood risk guidance.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> *Advisory Document: Residential Use of Inland Waterways*, Association of Inland Navigation Authorities (2011): <https://aina.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/RUIW-Feb11.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> *Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment*, Oxford City Council (2019): [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/6753/2019\\_helaa\\_main\\_report](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/6753/2019_helaa_main_report)

<sup>32</sup> *Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment* (see above)

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#Permitted-development-rights-and-flood-risk>

The planning requirements, licences and associated fees for establishing a new residential moorings (see 3.1.2 - 3.1.4 below) are also less onerous and cheaper in general than bricks & mortar housing development, also providing a less resource intensive and shorter-term process to community-led groups.

Oxford City Council's Net Zero Action Plan (2021)<sup>34</sup> describes an intention to consider 'environmental co-benefits' in the delivery of affordable housing. Despite the use of diesel engines there is anecdotal evidence that people who live on boats have a lower environmental impact.<sup>35</sup> If moorings are designed to be more environmentally sustainable (see recommendations in Section 3.1.4), reducing the need for running diesel engines, supporting residential moorings could be a way for the City Council to meet their commitment to providing low-carbon homes.

### 3.1.2 Environment Agency requirements

On the River Thames, The EA requirements mainly regulate construction on the site of the moorings rather than the activity of mooring itself. Many authorised, managed moorings are simply stretches of riverbank without any hard engineering where boats simply insert mooring pins into the bank. Indeed, the Environment Agency 'promotes 'soft engineering' methods to control erosion'<sup>36</sup>. However, a concrete bank with fixed mooring hoops or bollards provides greater security against boats coming loose in high winds or fast flowing water (although anecdotal evidence from local boaters suggests this is rare) and a hard edge path prevents a very muddy riverbank in winter due to regular footfall.

The EA also has regard to the safety, in terms of flood risk, of the occupants on a residential mooring site. Here is the AINA (Association of Inland Navigation Authorities) guidance:

*To enable its consideration of flood risk the Environment Agency will require that the developer provides a flood risk assessment. The Environment Agency may object to planning applications where this risk assessment does not demonstrate that the development and its occupants/users will be safe for the lifetime of the development, does not increase flood risk elsewhere and does not seek to reduce risk overall<sup>37</sup>.*

A floating pontoon dock would mitigate flood risk and may be appropriate in some locations. The most appropriate type of riverbank engineering for any sites should be considered by a marine surveyor. If riverbank engineering of any type were constructed on the Thames, an environmental permit and accommodation license would be required from the EA.

If a section of the waterway is not currently an officially navigable route, further negotiation with the EA may be needed, including a fee for the waterway to be appropriately maintained as to be navigable.

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<sup>34</sup> [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/7525/net\\_zero\\_oxford\\_action\\_plan\\_march\\_2021](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/7525/net_zero_oxford_action_plan_march_2021)

<sup>35</sup> For example: <https://theecologist.org/2013/aug/09/its-not-easy-being-green-unless-you-live-boat>

<sup>36</sup> <https://aina.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/RUIW-Feb11.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> <https://aina.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/RUIW-Feb11.pdf>

### **i) Environmental permit:**

On rivers with 'statutory main river' status, 'any activity within 8 metres of the bank'<sup>38</sup> is defined as regulated activity. River status can be found using the EA's map<sup>39</sup> The Weir Stream on which Redbridge Paddock is sited holds 'statutory main river' status.

The EA's West Thames Partnership and Strategic Overview Team let us know that a 'bespoke permit'<sup>40</sup> would be required for hard engineering on the riverbank. The application requires a detailed description of the proposed construction activities, an environmental risk assessment and design drawings. A decision is normally reached within two months of the application being made and incurs a charge of £446 (with a further annual subsistence cost of £271<sup>41</sup> for the period the permit needs to remain in place).

### **ii) Flood Risk Activity permit**

This is required for:

- any dredging, raising or taking of any sand, silt, ballast, clay, gravel or other materials from or off the bed or banks of a main river (or causing such materials to be dredged, raised or taken), including hydrodynamic dredging and desilting;<sup>42</sup>
- any activity within 8 metres of a non-tidal main river (or within 8 metres of any flood defence structure or culvert on that river) which is likely to cause damage to or endanger the stability of the banks of that river or of any culvert,

A pre-application form can be completed to gain initial, basic, free advice from the EA on which type of permit to apply for and which guidance to follow<sup>43</sup>.

### **iii) Accommodation licence:**

As stated above, it is anticipated this would be required only in the case that a hard mooring was constructed at the site. If a license is needed this would cost £55 for the application plus annual charges<sup>44</sup>. The application ([more information here](#)) requires plans and a reference number relating to an environmental permit application if sought.

### **iv) Natural England**

Additionally, it is recommended that Natural England is contacted to check whether the site is in a location that may affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or similar.

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<sup>38</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits#check-if-your-activity-is-regulated>

<sup>39</sup> <https://environment.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=17cd53dfc524433980cc333726a56386>

<sup>40</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits#bespoke-permits>

<sup>41</sup> See [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/790217/EPR-charging-scheme-with-schedule-consolidated-2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/790217/EPR-charging-scheme-with-schedule-consolidated-2019.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2016/1154/schedule/25/made>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/8ILLCT/>

<sup>44</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-thames-corporate-accommodations-tariff/corporate-accommodation-tariff-2020-to-2021>

### 3.1.3 Canal & River Trust Requirements

To create a mooring on a waterway managed by the Canal & River Trust, i.e., the Oxford Canal in Oxford, requires an application and the adherence to certain principles or requirements depending on the location of the mooring<sup>45</sup>.

#### **i) For online moorings**

New online moorings i.e., alongside the towpath, are retained primarily for 14 days, short-stay visitor and temporary winter moorings. However, in the CRT guidance it states that with any new 'linear' mooring there is an assumption that in the future it could be used for residential moorings.

The location must meet certain principles and requirements to gain approval from the CRT. Some of the criteria for approval and minimum standards outlined is worth consulting for any future moorings even if they are not on CRT waterways, as they have implications for design and planning of moorings in general<sup>46</sup>.

If the proposal requires any physical works or affects the Trust's property or the navigation or operational activities of the Trust, then a further works proposal is needed. For the assessment of a new online mooring location there is a non-refundable fee of £90. Where water resource sensitivities exist, it might be necessary to commission a Stage 2 Water Resource Study which requires a cost contribution of £2,250 plus VAT.

#### **ii) For offline moorings / marinas**

There is a four stage process to gain permission for an offline mooring or marina on the CRT's waterways from expression of interest to a detailed design and construction submission, costing a total of £8,130 + VAT in fees.<sup>47</sup>

#### **iii) Offline moorings accessed from private property**<sup>48</sup>

Where there is a third party landowner and an agreement for a number of boats to be moored alongside their land, and the Canal & River Trust own the water space but not the land access to the mooring, they still require the boat owners mooring there to have a mooring agreement with Waterside Mooring. However, they assume that the boat owners pay the landowner for access across their land and for any facilities they may provide, and therefore offer a reduced mooring fee (50% of the nearest the Trust Long Term Mooring site) to those mooring on their waters via a 12 month mooring agreement.

### 3.1.4 Summary of planning guidelines and recommendations from other bodies

#### **i) National Bargee Travellers Association Best Practice Guide for Boat Dweller Accommodation Needs Assessments**

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<sup>45</sup> See <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/business-and-trade/boating-business/starting-or-expanding-a-boating-business/marinas-and-moorings>

<sup>46</sup> See <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/refresh/media/thumbnail/41307-business-boating-online-moorings-process.pdf>. See also: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/4497.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> See <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/business-and-trade/inland-marina-development-guide/new-marina-application-process>

<sup>48</sup> See <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/boating/moorings/long-term-moorings>

In 2019 the NBTA put together a best practice guide<sup>49</sup> for local authorities carrying out boat dweller accommodation Needs Assessments under Section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. This provides useful information about general planning considerations. They recommend:

- Provision of temporary moorings with adequate mooring pins/rings that allow for periods of stay up to 42 days and longer if their circumstances demand, for liveaboard boaters or bargee travellers who choose an itinerant way of life and travel from one temporary mooring to another.
- Provision of additional permanent residential moorings should not be created by using existing temporary moorings, as the removal of temporary sites restricts access to those who prefer a “nomadic way of life”.
- They also recommend the following infrastructure to meet the needs of bargee travellers:
  - Access to potable water taps; sewage disposal and rubbish disposal. Compost toilets are also beginning to become more established on boats and some areas may benefit from having community compost site(s).
  - Dry docks and wet docks where Bargee Travellers and boat dwellers can carry out essential DIY maintenance and repairs to their homes.
  - Access to facilities for recycling or disposing of used engine oil and for bulky domestic waste
  - Increase in provision of mains electricity at permanent moorings. Although they acknowledge that this isn't practical in some locations or essential as the majority of boat dwellers generate electricity off-grid. Some boats are also not adapted to use 240v electricity hook-ups.
  - Access to public transport or parking

### **ii) Inland Waterways Association**

In 2020 The IWA published their “Vision for Sustainable Boating’. This included recommendations which have relevance to planning and design of moorings including:

- Investment in mains connection charging sites across the connected inland waterways network to reduce emissions from engines run for charging batteries and stoves for heating and enable the move towards electric propulsion. They highlight the Eco-Zone moorings in Islington managed by the CRT<sup>50</sup> where they have special mooring agreements with restrictions on more polluting activity<sup>51</sup>.
- Dredging to make propulsion more efficient and have additional environmental benefits on water quality and increasing capacity for flood waters.

### **iii) The Canal & River Trust**

The CRT guidelines for the planning and design of marinas<sup>52</sup>, primarily for leisure purposes, has some general relevance for residential moorings. Some key points are:

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<sup>49</sup> Best Practice Guide for Boat Dweller Accommodation Needs Assessments under Section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, National Bargee Travellers Association (2019): [http://www.bargee-traveller.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2019-03-12\\_V7\\_NBTA\\_Best\\_Practice\\_Guide\\_Boat\\_Dweller\\_Acommodation\\_Needs\\_Assessments\\_S124\\_HPA2016.pdf](http://www.bargee-traveller.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2019-03-12_V7_NBTA_Best_Practice_Guide_Boat_Dweller_Acommodation_Needs_Assessments_S124_HPA2016.pdf)

<sup>50</sup> See [https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/london-and-south-east/islington-eco-mooring-zone-trial?gclid=CjwKCAjwvuGJBhB1EiwACU1AiQq9XSWE1KsCx4nq1tUFLH5uga5TTAs0mRAGjUNr2WO1a-U1Mw9ggxoChh0QAvD\\_BwE](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/london-and-south-east/islington-eco-mooring-zone-trial?gclid=CjwKCAjwvuGJBhB1EiwACU1AiQq9XSWE1KsCx4nq1tUFLH5uga5TTAs0mRAGjUNr2WO1a-U1Mw9ggxoChh0QAvD_BwE)

<sup>51</sup> See <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/refresh/media/original/43684-special-ts-and-cs-0421.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> See <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/business-and-trade/inland-marina-development-guide>

- They do not specify the minimum standards or ratios of facilities but state: “boaters require a minimum standard of facilities, such as pump out, elsan disposal, water supply and refuse disposal”
- “Consideration should be given to 'grey water' from boats, which includes wastewater from sinks, showers and washing machines. We encourage recycling processes and collection of wastewater to prevent overboard discharge into the mooring site”
- “The design [...] will need to take account of reasonably foreseeable water level variations to ensure safe access to and egress from moored boats. Solutions include floating, rather than fixed, pontoons”
- “Wherever possible, soft vegetated waterside edges should be considered [...] to break up the impact of any hard engineering works [and] help to establish aquatic marginal habitats”

#### **iv) The Residential Boat Owners' Association**

The RBOA has developed a Code of Good Practice document<sup>53</sup>, which they encourage their members and other boat owners to follow, which includes:

- 'Keeping boats in a condition which complements the local environment'
- 'Keeping boats in a safe condition, so they do not present a hazard to users of our waterways'

Similarly, other boaters' cooperatives and community-led moorings have similar codes or membership agreements setting out standards and terms of use (see Section 5.2).

### 3.2 Legal requirements for boats

Residential boaters require the following to comply with the law.

#### **i) Waterways license**

All boats kept, used or let for hire on the River Thames must be registered with the Environment Agency<sup>54</sup>. All boats used on CRT managed waterways require a CRT license<sup>55</sup>. For itinerant boaters who regularly use both CRT and EA waterways a joint 'gold license' is recommended giving access to both. Both agencies require insurance and a Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) certificate for residential boats as a condition of their respective licenses.

#### **ii) Third party boat insurance**

This is required to gain both EA and CRT licenses. This will usually require a copy of a survey, carried out by a qualified boat surveyor, which will check the general integrity of the boat.

#### **iii) Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) Certificate**

The Boat Safety Scheme is a public safety initiative owned equally by the Canal & River Trust and the Environment Agency. Its purpose is to help minimise the risk of boat fires, explosions, or pollution - it is described as 'a boating version of the MOT'. It sets standards for boats, their installations and components. However, a BSS examination is not a full

<sup>53</sup> See <https://www.rboa.org.uk/code-of-good-practice/>

<sup>54</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-thames-boat-registration-requirements/river-thames-boat-registration-requirements-october-2016>

<sup>55</sup> See <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/boating/buy-your-boat-licence>



condition survey and it doesn't check the boat's general mechanical condition. For example, it does not cover the condition of the hull or deck. These would be checked by a boat survey which is often a requirement of boat insurance.

Vessels that have no domestic cooking, heating, refrigerating or lighting appliances installed, are not fitted with other permanent electrical systems (such as navigation lights, engine start/tilt etc) and which are propelled solely by an outboard engine without a fixed fuel system are exempt from the BSS. However, it is very unlikely a liveaboard vessel would fall into this category.

To gain the certificate minimum standards must be met and assessed by a qualified examiner. The certificate must be renewed once every four years.<sup>5657</sup>

#### **vi) Payment of council tax**

Although provision of services are included as part of the waterway's licences, some liveaboard boaters with permanent moorings are eligible to pay Council Tax. Council Tax only applies to the mooring but not the boat itself. The guidelines on the Valuation Office's council tax manual suggests that if a boat, which is someone's sole or main residence is moored "permanently" and "exclusively" at a specific mooring, then the mooring is domestic property, and both the mooring and the boat are subject to Council Tax.<sup>58</sup>

However, guidance suggests that, if a boat has a mooring agreement which does not give exclusive use of a particular 'pitch' (i.e., it entitles mooring at any section of an area of moorings) or if the boat moves away for any time a specific 'pitch' is not reserved for the boat on return, they are not eligible for Council Tax. In practice, it appears that some Canal & River Trust moorings and other private moorings operate on this basis.

### 3.3 Summary of local and national strategy and policy

#### 3.3.1 Oxford City Council Report

In November 2020 the City Council Waterways Officer presented a report to the Scrutiny Committee with proposals for improvements to infrastructure for liveaboard boaters and community-managed moorings. This report acknowledged that "basic infrastructure for live-aboards moored in Oxford is absent". Members commented that: "if boats are truly to be considered homes, an equivalence of spending between those residents living on boats and those on land is justified, and that the current level of infrastructure is suggestive that the boat-dwellers may at present be underserved". The report also states that the potential "development at Redbridge Paddocks does appear to provide a good opportunity" [for moorings / facilities]<sup>59</sup>.

In January 2021 the cabinet responded with the following recommendations that the Oxford City Council:

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<sup>56</sup> See <https://www.boatsafetyscheme.org/requirements-examinations-certification/qa-on-bss-examinations/>

<sup>57</sup> See [https://www.boatsafetyscheme.org/media/268789/ecp-private-boats-ed3\\_rev2\\_apr2015\\_public\\_final.pdf](https://www.boatsafetyscheme.org/media/268789/ecp-private-boats-ed3_rev2_apr2015_public_final.pdf)

<sup>58</sup> See practice note 7: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/council-tax-manual/council-tax-practice-notes>

<sup>59</sup> See <https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s57630/Report%20to%20Cabinet%20-%20Waterways%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

- “ensures the provision of facilities for boats to dispose of waste, empty sewer tanks and take on fresh water at Redbridge Paddocks or an alternative venue locally”. This will be encouraged through “instructing [...] planning officers”.
- “explores the option of community ownership for moorings when ownership and management arrangements are decided”
- “incorporates the provision of electric charging points for boats into its strategic development plans for the waterways, particularly in those areas where moorings are in close proximity to housing and schools”
- “recognises that boats provide one of the few affordable housing options in the city” and “includes within its refreshed Housing and Homelessness Strategy a section to consider the implications and responsibilities arising from endorsing the use of boats as homes in Oxford”<sup>60</sup>

If Oxford City Council were to recognise boats as homes in their Housing & Homelessness Strategy, they would set a pioneering example, as there are no known local authorities that have done this yet. Oxford's position as having the most unaffordable housing in the country and two waterways make it an appropriate place to demonstrate leadership in this way.

### 3.3.2 National Policy

Although liveaboard boats are not mentioned in any national policy, various stakeholders have lobbied for recognition of boats as part of the ‘housing mix’ in any national housing policy, as well as advocating for boats to be legally recognised as housing rather than chattels<sup>61</sup>, and thus be afforded similar legal protections.

However, boats are recognised as housing as part Housing Benefit / Universal credit regulations. If you live on a boat, you can claim housing benefit or universal credit to help pay mooring fees, rent (if the boat is not owned) and licences<sup>62</sup>.

Although there have been some cases where benefits have been withdrawn for the payment of licences, there has recently been a court ruling in favour of licence fees as eligible to be covered by housing benefit / universal credit<sup>63</sup>.

## Section 3 - Conclusions and recommendations

- Oxford City Council has policy for moorings through the Oxford plan and has expressed a commitment to improving mooring opportunities.
- Moorings can provide additional and affordable housing opportunities to contribute to meeting Oxford's housing crisis. **Oxford City Council could lead the way nationally by including a recognition of boats providing an affordable housing alternative in their new Housing & Homelessness strategy,**

<sup>60</sup> See <https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=355&MId=5653&Ver=4>

<sup>61</sup> For example see *Written Evidence to Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee Inquiry into long-term delivery of social and affordable rented housing*, National Bargee Travellers Association (2020): <https://www.bargee-traveller.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2019-07-12-NBTA-Evidence-to-MHCLG-Inquiry-into-provision-of-social-affordable-rented-housing.pdf> or *Submission to the Select Committee on Transport, Local Government and the Region*, The Residential Boat Owners (2002): <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200102/cmselect/cmtlgr/809/809m19.htm>

<sup>62</sup> See [https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing\\_advice/homeownership/living\\_on\\_a\\_boat](https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/homeownership/living_on_a_boat)

<sup>63</sup> See <https://www.bargee-traveller.org.uk/landmark-judgement-confirms-housing-benefit-for-boat-licence-fees/>

- There are very **few legal requirements or minimum standards** around the provision of mooring / bank infrastructure and services / facilities. However, most agencies and boaters' associations appear to be moving toward lower-impact, environmentally sustainable approaches. **Any new mooring in the city should be guided by best practice and recommendations from national agencies, prioritising low-impact and sustainable design and infrastructure. These standards should be included in any follow on feasibility work.**

## 4. Community-led Moorings

In recent years, there has been an increase in interest and the development of community-led approaches to living aboard. There are now around 9 community-led mooring projects or boaters cooperatives across the UK that are either established or in early development stages, with the majority having been set up in the last 5 years. 5 of these projects are in the Greater London area.

Further examples of community led moorings can be found in Appendix 2.

### 4.1 Case studies of community-led moorings

These case studies were obtained through research and conversations with those involved.

#### **Case Study 1: Calderdale Boat Club**

Situated on the Rochdale Canal in West Yorkshire this co-op has been up and running since 2007 and registered as a Co-operative Society in 2017. Members are not allocated a specific mooring berth, but instead roam between the 4 locations leased by the club. They are classified as leisure moorings - as a result the tenants do not have access to council services (such as rubbish collection); do not pay council tax and cannot claim housing benefit.

**Facilities:** No services provided by the co-op. Hebden Bridge has the closest service point, and provides a rubbish collection point, water point and sanitary station.

**Arrangement with waterway authority:** The co-op holds no lease with Canal & River Trust (CRT) and so in this sense they are effectively a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO). The coop is responsible for the moorings and collect the rent and deal with any issues. CRT gives a 25% discount off market rate on the mooring fees. In their contract CRT has no responsibility for maintaining the canal, however, in practice, they do according to a member.

**Membership process:**

- Prospective members attend a Calderdale Boat Club meeting to put their name on the club waiting list.
- Application form requests boat details, personal details, including how they would benefit the club as members.

- Selection criteria include: how long the prospective member has been waiting, length of boat, participation in club meetings and members' views on what the prospective member can bring to the club.
- New members are voted in by existing members.
- Membership is provisional for the first 6 months and will be reviewed at the end of this period.
- Members may hand in their notice to the club at any time, with 3 months' notice. In exceptional circumstances, a member may 'work' a shorter period of notice with the agreement of the club, if a suitable replacement member is found in time.

**Tenancy rules:**

- No generators or engines running after 8pm (unless specifically agreed with your neighbours and not causing a noise nuisance generally).
- No dog fouling or cluttering the towpath with 'tat'.
- Members are expected to treat each other with respect and abide by the law, the boat club rules and guidelines, and the cooperative rules.

**Governance:**

Calderdale Boat Club holds quarterly meetings. On occasion, extra meetings are called if there is a larger issue to discuss or resolve. Members are expected to attend meetings whenever possible and should attend at least 2 per year.

**Finance:**

CRT gives a 25% discount off market rate on the mooring fees. New members pay for 3 months mooring fees and a bond equivalent to 3 months mooring fees which is returnable upon termination of club membership. Mooring fees then payable on a quarterly basis.

**Case Study 2: Rotheram and Sheffield Canal Association (RASCA)**

Established in 1978 this co-op has approximately 12 moorings in one location on the Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation.

**Facilities:**

- Water points
- Elsan & pump out
- No mains electric but shared solar being installed
- Diesel
- Gas bottle storage
- Individual growing space adjacent to moorings
- Shared vegetable plots, fruit trees, and beehives
- Clubhouse with kitchen, toilet, and office facilities
- Short-term moorings for members of the Association of Waterways Cruising Clubs (AWCC)

**Arrangement with waterway authority:**

Lease from CRT, which was initially 5 years and now is 15 years.

**Membership process:**

- Application for membership requires a proposer and seconder for the potential new

member. Proposers must be fully paid-up members of the association, and seconders must be trustees or committee members.

- All applications shall be accepted or rejected by the committee as a collective.
- Any potential member whose application is rejected shall have the right of appeal at the next monthly meeting.

**Tenancy rules:**

- Moorings must be maintained in a clean and tidy condition.
- In the event that any Association Member feels that a Mooring is not in a clean and tidy condition, and either breaches the terms of the Associations lease with the Canal & River Trust or is below the standards set by the Association, they shall report that Member concerned at the next monthly Meeting of the Association. A vote shall be taken at that Meeting and if the complaint is upheld by the majority of Members present, the Member responsible for the Mooring shall be given 7 days from the date of that meeting to bring the Mooring up to the required standard or pay a monetary fine of an amount set by the Members having due regard to the nature and severity of the complaint.
- Has a Disciplinary Board composed of the committee plus two ordinary members which considers complaints against members. So far as reasonably practicable all Members of the Disciplinary Board (including Committee Members) are to be impartial to both the transgressor and the complainant. Any Member can be expelled from the Association if he/she breaks the Rules of the Association, acts in a manner which may bring the Association into disrepute or acts in a manner which in the opinion of the Disciplinary Board can be construed as anti-social behaviour. The Board has the power to expel Members.

**Governance:**

- Unincorporated Association.
- In order to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the CRT lease the association appoints two Trustees.
- The Trustees will be granted sole rights of interpretation of the lease in the event of a dispute between the Association and individual Members.
- Monthly meetings, usually after a work party, where information is shared, committee members give updates, and any decisions are agreed and voted on.

**Finance:**

- Moorings cost £2 per foot, per month.
- Membership fee is £10 per year.
- The club states that a mooring with them versus a local marina costs up to £1,000 less.
- In an interview with a member of the group this was explained as a direct result of the members' volunteer labour.

**Other:**

Members also reported:

- *We hold monthly work parties where most of our work is done, but there are always things to be done in-between times and other ways that members support the Association.*
- *Whatever we do, we try to have fun along the way. Whether that's at our social events, boating trips, or informal get-togethers*

## 4.2 Benefits of community-led moorings

The basis for this report rests upon the belief that there are numerous benefits to taking a community-led approach to residential moorings. These benefits include:

- Boaters have greater control over the design and management of sites
- Boaters have greater control over the costs of moorings
- The site could be potentially more affordable due to lower overheads if managed by a community group bringing volunteer labour
- Allocations of moorings could be more transparent and based on need rather than the price someone is willing to pay
- Groups are more rooted in the local community and often want to improve the biodiversity, sustainability and useability of the moorings site for the wider community. Many groups encourage visitors to the waterway through biodiversity and other leisure opportunities

Many of these benefits would provide a direct solution to many of the challenges identified in Section 2.1.2 of the report around affordability, security autonomy and democracy.

## 5. A review of potential mooring sites and opportunities

### 5.1 Principles and approaches to identifying mooring locations

When formulating the approaches and assessment of site for moorings, the following principles were considered:

- **Avoid privatising existing accessible temporary mooring space:** We advise against converting existing temporary moorings into permanent residential moorings. Reducing the number of temporary moorings further limits the boaters who choose to continuously cruise.
- **Take a cooperative rather than an enforcement approach where possible:** There is a precedent of presumption of lawful use for moorings which have been used residentially for a certain amount of time (10 years). Where there are existing unregulated residential moorings, the agencies should seek a collaborative approach whereby mooring spaces can be made available to meet the needs of the boaters.

#### **Case Study: The River Roding Trust**

An interesting example where a cooperative rather than enforcement approach has worked is in the case of the River Roding Trust. The project was started by several boaters who were using a section of the River Roding as unregulated moorings. The boaters started by improving the access and cleanliness of the surrounding area which was largely polluted and unnavigable. Those who lived there paid a contribution toward maintenance of the area and the upkeep of the informal mooring. They formed a trust and secured the lease on the land from the Crown Estate with the support of Barking & Dagenham Council and Thames Water.

*(The source of this information was the Inland Waterways Association's talk on Community mooring projects on 26th October 2021)*

<https://riverrodingtrust.org.uk/>

The researchers have identified several approaches or routes to identifying sites for community-owned moorings:

### **i) Working with existing informal moorings or boaters' groups**

Where there are existing unregulated mooring sites which are being used on a long-term residential basis, with or without explicit permission, where the resident boaters are willing to formalise and/or take a community-led approach. This may be especially where the boaters are facing eviction or other fines / sanctions for occupying the mooring on a longer-term residential basis. In many cases groups of boaters on unregulated moorings are already operating informally on a cooperative basis and have invested time and their own finances in maintaining the moorings and promoting the biodiversity of the site.

Another option might be for groups of boaters on current regulated moorings in the city, especially the Agenda 21 moorings, to form a management cooperative to manage facilities - like with the case study of the Calderdale Boat Club.

### **ii) Extension of existing leisure marinas**

There are several non-residential marinas in Oxford, which provide storage for leisure boats including:

- [Bossoms Boatyard](#) - 120 berths
- [Osney Marina](#) - unknown number of berths
- [Osney Mill Marina](#) - 40 berth
- Godstow Bridge - unknown number of berths

There are also two companies who have business moorings for boat cruises or leisure boat hire, [Salters Steamers](#) and [College Cruisers](#).

More residential moorings could be created by converting some berths on these marinas into permanent residential moorings. However, given the higher costs of providing facilities and services to residential boats, as opposed to unoccupied boats, it seems less likely that private providers would find this commercially viable.

However, The City Council may be able to encourage private providers through support with costs of infrastructure or removing planning obstructions. This is particularly relevant in the case of Bossoms Boatyard, where half of the land covered by the leisure moorings is owned by the City Council and leased to Bossoms to manage. These may be operated on a private basis whilst the landowner retains their ownership of the land, however there could be opportunities for cooperative management of facilities for example by boaters collectively renting the moorings.

### **iii) Extension length of stay for existing temporary moorings**

As recommended in the above sections, existing temporary moorings on the waterways under the authority of the Environment Agency could have their length of stay extended to anywhere between 14 and 56 days. Other sites on the river, where temporary mooring is not currently permitted, could be made into temporary moorings or winter moorings. This would give longer-term opportunities for continuous cruisers seeking more security. Extended temporary mooring would not incur a fee as with other temporary moorings on the Thames and Oxford Canal, but winter moorings may be chargeable.

These could potentially still be managed by an established cooperative of boaters who negotiate the booking or use of the winter moorings.

#### **iv) New sites**

Identify new pieces of land where there is not currently mooring but where some engineering works or development may allow for residential moorings. Especially on land adjoining the waterways where residential development may be proposed.

## 5.2 Description of methodology

### **i) Scoping sites**

Sites were scoped and identified through referencing several sources:

- **Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment (2018)** - several potential locations were suggested in the report, but no further feasibility was conducted into these sites
- **Review of sections of Oxford's Waterways - A report by City Development and others into the suitability of potential mooring sites put forward by B.O.A.T. (2012)**<sup>64</sup> - the Unlawfully Moored Boat Enforcement Group (now disbanded) received a list of sections of the Oxford's waterways forward by BOAT, a boater advocacy group, for potential moorings. The City Council's Planning Department and other stakeholders reviewed the list and produced a report. The report concluded that the majority of sites were unsuitable for development but suggested that 4 sites may be viable, but more feasibility work and surveys were needed.
- **Oxford City Council's Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment**<sup>65</sup> - this report reviewed land in Oxford to assess the suitability for housing development. Attention was paid to parcels of land adjoining the waterways, especially those that had been identified as in a flood risk zone or that had been ruled out for bricks and mortar housing development due to the size or constraints on the site. One report suggested that sites even under 0.25 HA would provide an 'admirable' mooring provision<sup>66</sup>.
- **Who Owns Oxford** - is a project mapping land ownership in Oxfordshire in order to provide more transparency on how land is owned and used across the county. Parcels of land along the waterways and their owners were identified using this map. <https://www.whoownsxford.org>
- **Oxfordshire County Council Flood Toolkit** - is a publicly accessible tool mapping flood risk. <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/risk/>
- **Inland Waterways Association Canal Map** - is a combined map of all navigable waterways in the UK. <https://waterways.org.uk/waterways/uk-canal-map>
- **Riparian ownership maps** - downloadable from OCC website. [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/20101/community\\_safety](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/20101/community_safety)
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<sup>64</sup> [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2508/city\\_development\\_review\\_of\\_oxfords\\_waterways\\_report.pdf](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2508/city_development_review_of_oxfords_waterways_report.pdf)

<sup>65</sup> [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/788/housing\\_and\\_economic\\_land\\_availability\\_assessment\\_helaa](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/788/housing_and_economic_land_availability_assessment_helaa)

<sup>66</sup> *Oxford City Council Draft Local Plan 2016 – 2036 Consultation Submission*, The National Bargee Travellers Association (2017), [https://www.bargee-traveller.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2017-08-25\\_NBTA\\_response-OCC\\_draft\\_Local\\_Plan\\_consultation.pdf](https://www.bargee-traveller.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2017-08-25_NBTA_response-OCC_draft_Local_Plan_consultation.pdf)



## **ii) Criteria for assessment**

The criteria used in the assessment was a synthesis of the guidelines outlined for moorings in the Local Plan (see Section 3.1.1) and criteria suggested in the Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment.

Boat capacity was calculated by dividing the length of the bank by an average boat length of 13 metres (43 feet) plus 1 metre assumed for spacing either side if boats were moored end to end = 15 metres. The average boat size used in this assessment for the purposes of obtaining a rough estimate was based on the Canal & River Trusts estimate of the average boat length on their waters<sup>67</sup>. However, this capacity estimate will always be the possible upper limit as further investigation might find certain sections of the bank unsuitable for mooring and lower density might be desirable to maintain desirable living standards and reduce environmental impact. In some cases where a marina or other arrangement is suggested then capacity will have been calculated differently.

As well as using the report identified above, visual assessments were done by the researchers and local boaters and stakeholders were also consulted. None of this information has been verified through surveys or professional advice. There is a disclaimer that further ecological, engineering and architectural surveys and advice would be needed on all sites identified.

As well as this, the following constraints were considered, and several locations were ruled out before assessment due to this:

- The Environment Agency does not permit residential mooring at any lock sites or islands on the River Thames<sup>68</sup>
- Some reports have suggested that the Environment Agency will not permit permanent residential moorings on the main river, but only on side channels or basins. They may permit temporary moorings on the main river. However, this could not be verified or supported by any Environment Agency policy documents that were publicly accessible at the time of the publication of this report.
- High and unpredictable flow and flooding patterns in some sections of the River Thames make mooring in winter very difficult or impossible.

## 5.3 Overview of sites

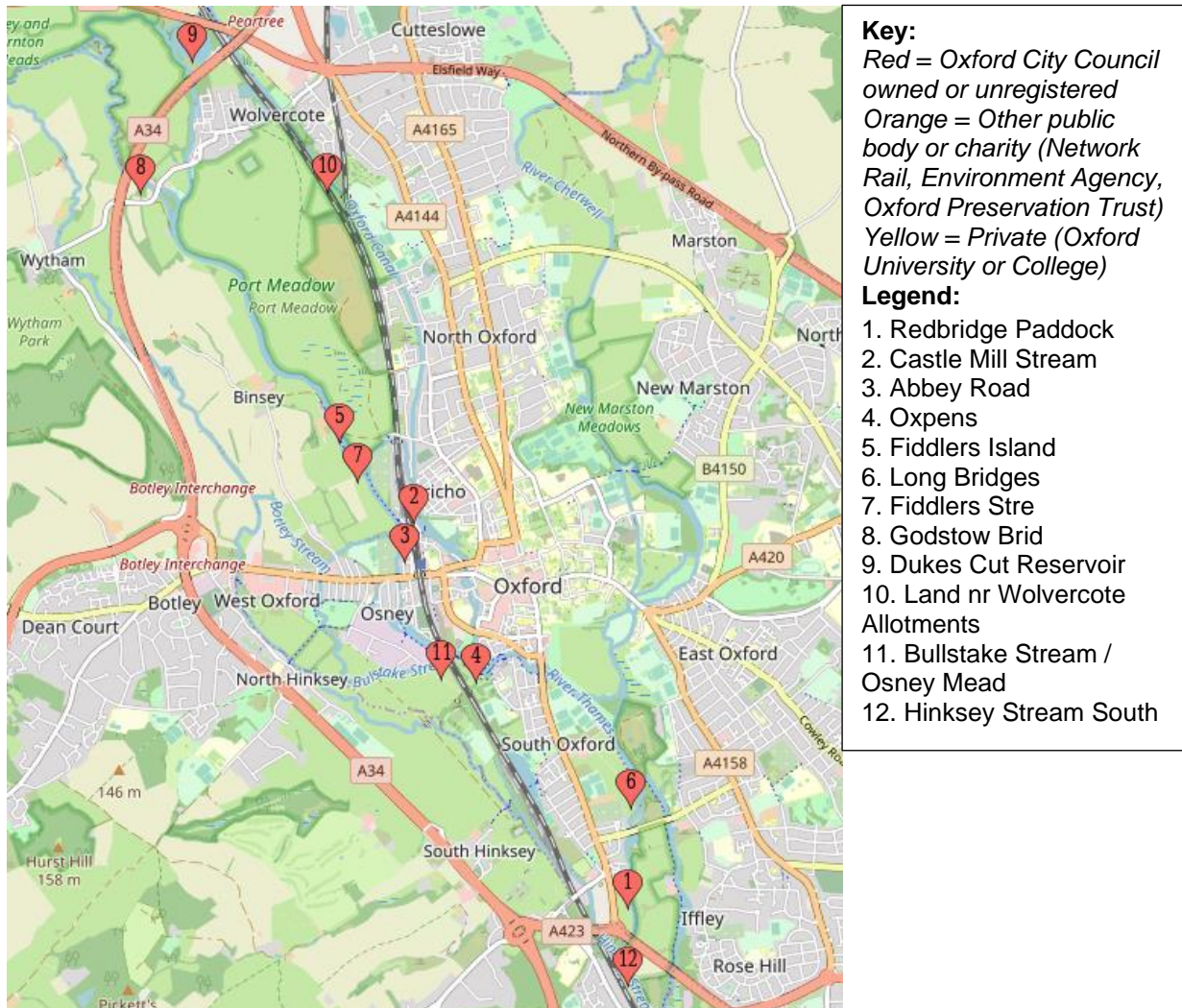
There were 12 sites identified and assessed as suitable. The majority of these are owned by Oxford City Council or other public bodies and are on the river Thames.

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<sup>67</sup> <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/business-and-trade/inland-marina-development-guide/new-marinas-getting-started>

<sup>68</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/848394/River-Thames-lock-site-mooring-application-form.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/848394/River-Thames-lock-site-mooring-application-form.pdf)

## Map 2: Potential moorings sites



[View interactive online map here](#)

(Map source: OpenStreetMap)

Below is a summary of locations with type of mooring proposed and potential boat capacity:

### High feasibility:

- Redbridge Paddock, Iffley Weir Stream - Permanent residential (up to 20 boats)
- Castle Mill Stream, Jericho - Permanent residential (up to 18 boats)

### Medium feasibility:

- Oxpens - Permanent residential or Marina or temporary or winter (up to 15 boats)
- Fiddlers Island, Port Meadows - Permanent residential (up to 29 boats)
- Fiddlers Stream - Extended temporary or winter (up to 33 boats)
- Land adjacent to Wolvercote Allotments - Permanent residential or winter (up to 3 boats)
- Dukes Cut Reservoir - Permanent residential marina (up to 57 boats)
- Hinksey Stream South - Permanent residential (up to 40 boats)

### Low Feasibility:

- Abbey Road - Extended temporary or winter (up to 15 boats)

- Long Bridges - Permanent residential (up to 9 boats)
- Godstow Bridge - Extended temporary or winter (up to 9 boats)
- Bullstake Stream - Permanent residential or marina (up to 29 boats)

A full overview with in-depth assessment on land-ownership feasibility, works required, environmental and planning considerations of all the potential sites identified can be found at Appendix 3.

## 5.4 Case Studies

### Case Study 1: Castle Mill Stream

The Castle Mill Stream is a good example of where agencies could take a collaborative approach with an existing group of resident boaters to help unlock a potential community-led mooring site.

There have been informal or unregulated moorings for at least 21 years on the section of stream that runs alongside the canal from the south end of William Lucy Way to opposite Combe Road in Jericho. The land was previously unregistered but in 2019 ownership of the 'undeveloped private rail track amenity land' was registered by Network Rail. Following this, Oxford City Council issued a planning enforcement notice to Network Rail for boats being moored there without planning permission. Network Rail served the boaters living there with an eviction notice in February 2019 for 'occupying the land without consent'.

The boaters living there have since formed a group and registered as a not-for-profit limited company, Castle Mill Stream Moorings. They are quoted saying that they aim to establish 'residential moorings, including floating pontoons, a water tap and a sewage disposal point' with 'affordable mooring fees' all to be financed by our mooring fees', which would be 'run by the boat dwellers themselves'. The group have been cleaning up the area and have re-floated one sunken boat on the stream. They have said: 'We agree that it requires proper management to prevent a cycle of abandoned boats appearing' and that 'stationary live-aboard boats provide the area with individuals who have a vested interest in the safety and upkeep of this otherwise dark corner of central Oxford'.

The boaters launched an appeal based on the case that the land has been used continuously for residential moorings for ten years. In September 2021 the Planning Inspectorate granted a Lawful Development Certificate for "the mixed use of the land [...] and the permanent residential mooring of two boats with the associated placement of up to two mooring pins and one gangplank per boat." The boaters have also approached Network Rail and there are suggestions that they are amenable to selling the land.<sup>69</sup>

Although there is a legal imperative for the outstanding planning issue to be resolved, there is a very timely opportunity for this site to be developed into community-led moorings alongside the wider regeneration of the Jericho Wharf. [The Jericho Wharf Trust](#) is the

<sup>69</sup> Sources for the information about Castle Mill Stream and quotes come from the following articles: <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/17574360.castle-mill-stream-boaters-battle-network-rail-eviction-threat/>; [https://www.jerichocentre.org.uk/jericho\\_news/news\\_item/castle-mill-eviction](https://www.jerichocentre.org.uk/jericho_news/news_item/castle-mill-eviction); [https://www.jerichocentre.org.uk/jericho\\_news/news\\_item/castle-mill-boaters-face-eviction](https://www.jerichocentre.org.uk/jericho_news/news_item/castle-mill-boaters-face-eviction); [https://www.jerichocentre.org.uk/jericho\\_news/news\\_item/gangplank-at-the-ready](https://www.jerichocentre.org.uk/jericho_news/news_item/gangplank-at-the-ready)

charity working to create a boatyard and community centre on the site of the Jericho Wharf housing development. The site could also provide a mooring for Kilsby, a historic narrowboat which is being restored by the Jericho Living Heritage Trust for conversion to a floating stage. As part of this development there may be dredging and bank works, which if coordinated could make cost savings. There are also proposed bridge works that may make the Castle Mill Stream more accessible for navigation. There are suggestions that the Jericho Wharf Trust could be a potential partner to support the development of community-led moorings on the Castle Mill Stream.

### **Case Study 2: Redbridge Paddock**

The current boater living on Redbridge Paddock has lived there on a permitted residential mooring for 6 years. In that time, they've improved the biodiversity of the site through their stewardship and planting 85 trees. They suggest leaving a green buffer zone of at least 25 metres between the river and housing to protect the existing natural environment<sup>70</sup>. They also report regular flooding in winter and the need for the design to be accommodating of this. They stated an interest in maintaining the mooring as an 'affordable, environmentally sensitive mooring created by local boaters' and would have interest in being part of a new community-led mooring on the site.

## Section 5 - Conclusions and recommendations

- The research identified 12 potential locations for moorings, the majority on the river. The Redbridge site has been identified as the most feasible for moorings and is therefore examined in a basic feasibility below. **We recommend further feasibility work to be done on this site.**
- There is potential to work with existing boaters group to formalise existing moorings, particularly in the case of the Castle Mill Stream, where the wider regeneration of the area makes this an excellent opportunity to unlock this site.
- Potential for moorings to be developed alongside wider regeneration projects such as Osney Mead and Oxpens could be identified and incorporated into the next iteration of the Local Plan.

## 6. A review of potential models & approaches

### 6.1 Summary of options for land ownership and management

There are a range of tenure and governance models which can fit together in different ways. We have attempted to outline these below along with some of the risks and benefits.

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<sup>70</sup> <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/18668437.spare-thought-nature-says-resident-housing-plans-redbridge-paddock/>

### 6.1.1 Mooring community-led tenure models

In terms of OCC's intention to create moorings at Redbridge Paddock these could be brought forward as a community-led scheme in a number of ways. These models may also be applicable to other sites outlined in Section 4.

#### **i) Land is transferred to a community-led group. The group funds and constructs the mooring site and manages it on behalf of the tenants.**

The city council transfer the site freehold or through a long lease arrangement to a community led group. In this scenario the group would need to raise finance for the project and deliver the development as well as take on the ongoing management. This is the approach taken by Surge Co-operative in London which is negotiating freehold land transfers with the Port of London authority.

Considerations:

- The benefit to the council would be a complete handover of responsibility for financing and development of the moorings - delivering on the Local Plan by drawing upon external expertise and finance.
- The site is secured for community-led boater use in perpetuity, avoiding the potential for parties to attempt to extract profit in future, and keeping mooring fees affordable.
- Groups often undertake this work and can be supported by Collaborative Housing throughout the process, however it can be a lot for groups to take on. It would equip groups to replicate the learning from this project to develop other mooring sites within Oxford.
- The council could still play a role in financially supporting the project through a loan (see section 7.3.2)

#### **ii) OCC / OCHL develops the moorings in partnership with a community group but covers costs. The site is then transferred to the group upon completion.**

Co-designing the moorings with interested boaters means that the moorings will have buy-in from potential boaters and help build a community. The site comes at lower risk to the group and finance may be easier to secure. OCHL retains control of the development stage The 'moorings' is defined as the infrastructure for the boats and that boats would be the boaters own or could potentially be provided by the community group for renting.

Considerations:

- This would require the council to develop or buy in some expertise in residential mooring development whilst still benefiting from the knowledge of the boaters group.
- This gives the council control over the development of the site without having to take on day to day responsibility for the future management.
- The model could potentially increase the cost of the development for the community group but risks to the group would be diminished.

#### **iii) OCC retains the site, covers development costs, but has a management agreement with the group who then manage the site on the Council's behalf.**

This would give the least community ownership but there could still be a co-design element with a community group. It would mean that boaters have greater control over how the site is managed and the management savings could make the moorings more affordable. The

boaters co-op would effectively be a 'tenant management organisation'. This is the approach undertaken by Calderdale Boat Club in Case Study 1.

Considerations:

- This would require the council to either develop or buy in some expertise in residential mooring development.
- The council would retain maximum control of the site without day to day responsibility for management.
- The resident boaters may be less inclined to invest time and money in the site due to the more precarious arrangement. They may also find it harder to raise finance externally.
- The group would benefit from increased financial support from the council with development but would have less control over their mooring fees.

### 6.1.2 Relationship with Redbridge Paddock community-led housing development

There is enthusiasm from OCC for a land-based community-led housing development on the Redbridge paddock site.

Discussions with City Council officers showed a willingness to consider how the land-based and water-based developments could overlap and work together. There is much potential for shared resources. Section 6.1 outlines the indoor and outdoor facilities which could be used by co-housing residents and residential boaters alike, such as a laundry facility, shed storage and food growing space.

There are several options for how the two developments could relate to each other in governance terms.

#### **i) Two separate organisations with a service agreement**

In this set up there would be a co-housing group (or similar) which either owns, or leases and manages a housing site. There would separately be a mooring co-op which could be based on any of the three models outlined above in Section 5.1.1. These two organisations would form an agreement allowing mooring co-op tenants access to specified resources on the co-housing site. The agreement would outline terms including a grievance process and would set a fee. This fee would be included in the mooring co-op members' monthly mooring fees as an additional form of service charge. There could be a joint committee formed to ensure the service agreement is maintained, oversee development and maintenance of the shared facilities, and deal with any disputes.

#### **ii) One organisation with two types of tenant**

Alternatively, there could be a single community-led housing organisation (with either a freehold or leasehold) and with two types of members - land-based and water-based. Some form of delegation of powers would be necessary to allow mooring specific questions to be discussed by boater tenants separately and vice versa.

The benefit of this approach would be joint design and control of all resources. The risks might include:

- It may be a challenge for the two groups to form a joint organisation to bid for the site given their very different circumstances.
- The two different groups of members may become frustrated with one another having a say in their housing when they live in separate and very different parts of the development.
- The differences in lifestyle, interests and potential length of tenancy could lead to poor relations between the two groups of members.

### 6.1.3 Land ownership by a third party

An option proposed by Blase Lambert, CEO of the Confederation of Co-operative Housing, was for land ownership by a democratically controlled third party, for instance a Community Land Trust. This organisation could own the freehold on both the housing development and mooring sites plus the indoor and outdoor shared facilities. The co-housing group and mooring co-op could both be corporate members of this body. A leasehold agreement would be held between the parties for their respective sites. A separate joint lease could be held for the shared facilities. Potentially this role could be performed by the Oxfordshire Community Land Trust, or a new vehicle established.

The benefits of a community land trust owning the land, as opposed to the co-op itself, are:

- An established CLT such as Oxfordshire Community Land Trust is better able to access capital finance and provide ongoing security.
- A CLT would have good experience and knowledge to oversee the group formation process.

## Section 6 - Conclusions and recommendations

- Of the various tenure options above the authors of the report recommend the transfer from the City Council to a community-land trust which subsequently sub-leases the mooring site to a newly formed boaters co-operative. This allows the City Council to deliver upon the Local Plan, by drawing upon external expertise and finance, without expending large amounts of resources.
- The tender for the community-led housing section of the Redbridge Paddock site should require interested groups to consider how they could develop shared resources for the use of the nearby boaters.

## 7. A basic feasibility for the Redbridge Paddock site

This section looks at how community-led moorings could be developed at Redbridge Paddock. It does not seek to provide a fully worked out business plan but simply to summarise the options available and provide some ballpark financial estimations where this was possible within the timeframe and scope of this report. Our conclusion is that there is a prime opportunity for a pioneering, gold-standard moorings development in this location. We recommend further work to explore this in detail.

### **i) Approach**

We have used the CRT guide to assessing feasibility<sup>71</sup> for new marinas as a guide to the issues pertinent to this site. Whilst CRT are not the riparian authority in this case and the proposal is not for a marina this still gave useful overview guidelines. This feasibility is based on the assumption is that issues such as archaeological remains, wildlife designations or other potential planning barriers are not an issue to moorings on the Redbridge site due to their inclusion in the Local Plan and an initial feasibility study for the site overall having already taken place<sup>72</sup>. However, further advice would be needed if these are still live considerations for the Redbridge site.

## 7.1 Infrastructure needs assessment

Several of the services below could both serve the residents of the Redbridge Paddock site plus help plug the shortfall in local facilities for continuous cruising boaters. This would also reflect OCC Cabinet's January 2021 response to the Scrutiny Committee waterways paper which recommended that access to water, sewage and refuse collection be made available at this site for boaters generally.

### **i) Water**

The Local Plan requires 'adequate access'. 100% of survey respondents wanted a water point at any new sites.

There would be an option to provide a water point alongside each mooring or to have a single tap at an accessible point for all boats. The latter approach could also allow non-resident boats access to water thereby easing a major current shortfall in local facilities. The lack of access to water on the river, as opposed to the canal, is especially critical given fast-flowing conditions in winter often prevent boats travelling to the distant current provision.

Grey water from boats is disposed of through outlets directly into the river.

### **ii) Electricity**

The Local Plan requires 'adequate access'.

Most boats are able to generate their own power through running the engine or rooftop solar panels. Most boats have the facility to hook up to mains electricity when provided at the waterside. Some permanent moorings provide mains electric, but not all (for instance the Agenda 21 moorings do not as part of their founding sustainability ethos). Potentially reflecting the often green credentials of liveaboard boaters, and the effectiveness of onboard solar, our survey showed just 33% wanting mains electric.

However, the IWA's 'Vision for Sustainable Boating' makes the case for shore power mains connection charging sites to 'enable significant improvement in air quality by allowing boats with suitable 240v electric wiring systems to charge their batteries instead of running a diesel engine, and to use electric heaters instead of relying on solid fuel stoves for heating'<sup>73</sup>.

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<sup>71</sup> <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/business-and-trade/inland-marina-development-guide/feasibility>

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/1664/independent-study-shows-that-redbridge-paddock-can-be-used-for-housing-development>

<sup>73</sup> <https://waterways.org.uk/about-us/news/sustainable-boating-vision>



Boaters being supported to switch to electric heating from solid fuel stoves would also reduce the impact of smoke on nearby residents. Moreover, this approach would be in line with the City Council's zero carbon agenda, Cabinet's January 2021 response to the Scrutiny Committee waterways paper, and give potential for leadership to be shown in sustainable moorings.

Clearly for both noise and pollution reasons it would be better for boats to avoid running engines for power generation. Indeed, this could be a condition of tenancy - either with a complete ban, or, for noise reasons, limiting this to daytime hours. Were this approach to be taken then either mains or increased solar access, potentially through shared onsite generation, would be necessary to supplement the boats' own generation capacity.

One survey respondent raised the idea of a shared wood store. Having a dry place to store wood also drastically improves the levels of air pollution from unseasoned wood.

### **iii) Refuse collection**

The Local Plan requires 'adequate access'. There was a near unanimous desire for refuse and recycling facilities on new sites in the survey plus 74% of people wishing for food waste disposal. These could be provided either as part of the development's shared bin facilities or separately. Additionally one survey respondent raised the idea of on-site food waste composting.

### **iv) Sewage disposal**

The Local Plan requires 'adequate access'.

There are two means of emptying toilet waste for boaters: an Elsan disposal point or a pump out facility. Different boats use different systems and some use both.

The survey showed 23% of respondents wished for a pump out facility whilst 85% wanted an Elsan point. Elsan facilities tend to be more commonly provided by other agencies such as The Canal & River Trust and the Environment Agency.

Compost toilets were also suggested by 3 respondents to the survey as an additional means of dealing with human waste and there is an increasing popularity in compost toilets on boats. A shared composting facility could provide the infrastructure for those using compost toilets.

### **v) Vehicle access**

The Local Plan requires '*adequate access for emergency services to ensure safety*'. There would be vehicle access for emergency services from Abingdon Road / A4144 for the development.

### **vi) Car parking and Cycle storage**

Whilst 44% of survey respondents wished for car parking space on any new site, there are intentions for the Redbridge development to be designated as car-free. Therefore, secure cycle storage should be provided to support cycling. Alternatively, arrangements could be made with the Redbridge Park and Ride facility to provide parking for the development. One respondent to the survey raised the idea of a shared electric car scheme.

### **vii) Shared facilities**

If there were to be a co-housing or community-led housing development on the site, it would provide an increased opportunity for shared facilities to be accommodated in the development. Many co-housing projects include similar shared facilities to those raised by respondents to our survey including:

- Garden / growing space / play space (74% of respondents)
- Shared / community space (74% of respondents)
- Shared laundry / drying facilities (72% of respondents)
- Shed / storage (59% of respondents)
- Shared toilet / shower block (38% of respondents)

Other respondents also raised the need for a shared kitchen and shelter outdoor seating. A further shared resource, not raised in the survey, but a common part of co-housing developments, are shared guest bedrooms.

The inclusion of such facilities would make the site a gold-standard mooring development. Many of these would also make liveaboard boating a more appealing and practical affordable option for families.

If such facilities were accessible to both the co-housing and boater residents there would be a strong argument for some level of shared governance which is explored in section 6.3. These facilities should be considered in the next stage of development of this project.

### **viii) Facilities of benefit to the wider boating community**

There was one suggestion in the survey that the Redbridge site could also provide boatyard style facilities by using the sheltered space under the road bridge. Affordable facilities for doing DIY work on boats were also popular with other survey respondents (59%), as well as fuel sale and hazardous waste collection. This would also offer a solution to current challenges for the wider boater community, as more professional dry and wet dock facilities are being planned for the upcoming Jericho Wharf development. The following could be considered in the next stage of development on this project.

### **ix) Mooring infrastructure and bank works**

Due to the reported presence of water voles and other animal habitats, sensitive natural banks should be favoured, as recommended by other navigation agencies. Due to regular flooding, the use of floating pontoons or other mooring facilities which can be adjusted depending on water levels. Any buildings or shared facilities would also need to be planned to be either out of reach of flood levels or be raised.

## **7.2 Income and cost estimations**

Our research suggests demand for moorings to be high, meaning this site should not struggle to attract tenants. The likelihood of continued pressure on housing in Oxford, creating a ripe market for liveaboard boating, suggests demand should be sustained into the longer-term. Clearly, the combination of the fee level and services on offer will determine how just popular they may be.

We have collected some general cost headings which are included below in Section 7.2.3. Some initial work has been done on gathering initial quotes however this lies outside the scope of this report. An in-depth feasibility study, to prove the financial viability of the project, is recommended for Stage 2 of this work.

### 7.2.1 Mooring capacity

The entire bank at Redbridge Paddock measures 463.22 m as shown by the image below. However, the south end is very close to the bypass so may not be appropriate for moorings due to traffic noise. There is currently a boat moored at the 200m suggesting this is a comfortable distance. We therefore propose, for the purposes of this report, that at least 200m of riverbank is appropriate for mooring - with the potential for 300m use once testing has been done for noise levels.

The proposed work of a marine surveyor would also give input on how many moorings are feasible - as both depth of water and any natural features such as trees or bends in the riverbank may also limit the number possible.

Using the capacity calculation (see Section 5.2) we estimate the following mooring capacity:

- 200 metre of riverbank = 13 mooring spaces
- 300 metre of riverbank = 20 mooring spaces

If mooring locations did not need to be fixed (for the purposes of individual water or electric hook up points) then the number of mooring spaces could change according to the length of boats at any one time. If this were the case mooring fees would need to be charged on a 'per metre' basis.

### 7.2.2 Mooring fees

We attempt here to give only a very ballpark estimation of potential mooring fee income. We have based this on data from our boater survey and current market rates for similar moorings in the South-East.

#### **i) Survey**

Based on the finding of the survey conducted as part of this research, a median of what local boaters would be prepared to pay could be calculated at £3,600 per annum. However, it should be noted that the majority of those responding to the survey could only afford up to £400 per month (£4,800 per annum)

#### **ii) Canal & River Trust mooring fees**

Although this information is commercially sensitive, we were able to obtain some publicly available information.

Current vacancies (October 2021) on the Waterside Moorings, the Canal & River Trusts commercial arm, include:

- £1,126 near Coventry, no electric
- £2,141, Shipton
- £3,383 near Reading, no electric

The Winter mooring in Oxford managed by The Canal & River Trust is in Band 3 with fees of £10.90 per metre per month. This would mean that an average boat of 13 metres would pay £141.70 per month. These moorings do not have designated facilities (access to facilities is elsewhere on the canal).

Based on these £3,400 may be considered a very rough estimate for current market rate for an urban location in the South East with facilities.

### **iii) Estimated annual mooring fee**

Based on the figures above we are using an estimated a minimum annual mooring fee income of **£2,400** (or £200 per month) as this is below market rates and within the amount survey respondents said they could afford. This could of course vary according to the financial needs of the project.

This fee could also vary according to boat length to allow the maximum number of boats in the space available.

### **vi) Boats for rent**

In addition to providing moorings for boater owner-occupiers we also think there is an argument for the co-operative to own several boats on the site which are let out for rent. Whilst buying a boat is a far cheaper alternative to buying a flat or house many people will not be able to access the capital to purchase a boat. Where this is the case and people are drawn to the boater lifestyle, they can often end up in very poor quality boats which have been brought very cheaply.

The co-op would purchase and maintain the boats for rent, earning an income with which to pay off the boats purchase price with the rent earned.

The mooring cooperative could fund the purchase of several new boats. This would clearly be at a significantly lower level than building bricks and mortar homes. The co-op would need to be responsible for the maintenance of these boats. These co-op members' fees would cover both rent for the boat and the mooring fee.

An average annual rent for a one- bedroom Oxford social rent home is currently around £5918 per annum (this is based upon a single search of one-bedroom social rent homes available on the council's Choice Based Lettings website in late October<sup>74</sup>). So rental income for a boat could bring in a similar level of income.

### **vii) Timeframe**

Clearly the mooring development cannot be considered separately to the housing development at Redbridge Paddock. It may be possible to initiate the mooring development at an earlier stage than the housing development - allowing for more basic, off-grid moorings at an earlier date. However, there would presumably be scope for reducing costs by carrying out many of the works concurrently. There may also be drawbacks for both boaters and developers to having boats resident on site whilst later works are carried out. If it was felt that the mooring development could progress at significantly greater speed than the housing

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<sup>74</sup> <http://www.oxfordcitycbl.org.uk/Data/ASPPages/1/5330.aspx>

development, and such drawbacks could be mitigated, then a two step process may be worth exploring further in Stage 2.

**viii) Cost per mooring**

An in-depth feasibility study should be able to give a rough figure for cost per person for a one-bedroom boat mooring. It would be interesting to compare this to the average cost of construction of a one-bedroom residential unit, for example in a Council or community-led housing development to show cost effectiveness of this solution.

**ix) Housing costs for the tenant**

Total annual housing costs for an owner-occupier boater will vary according to what type of license they have, the level of maintenance and repair costs, and whether they are repaying a loan on the boat’s purchase.

The Oxford Local Housing Allowance rate is £9300 per year for a one-bedroom home<sup>75</sup>. We have calculated that the Oxford LHA would likely easily cover the average total housing costs of a liveaboard boater with a mooring fee set at the above rate.

7.2.3 Costs

We have collected some general cost headings which are included below. Some initial work has been done on gathering initial quotes however this lies outside the scope of this report. An in -depth feasibility study, to prove the financial viability of the project, is recommended for Stage 2 of this work.

|   |
|---|
| <b>Feasibility (Stage 2 work)</b>   |
| Stage 2 Project Management consultancy fee/ Internal City Council staff costs |
| Planning Drawings   |
| Planning Consultant   |
| Marine survey   |
| Environmental permit application (if required)                                |
| Accommodation license administration fee (if required)                        |
| Accommodation license annual fee (if required)                                |
| <b>Legal &amp; Planning</b>   |
| Drawing up contracts (with council/ EA?)                                      |
| Payments to Richard Burbank during construction? <sup>76</sup>                |
| Planning permission 'change of use'   |
| Planning permission (if 'hard moorings' installed)                            |

<sup>75</sup> [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20175/local\\_housing\\_allowance/469/local\\_housing\\_allowance\\_rates](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20175/local_housing_allowance/469/local_housing_allowance_rates)

<sup>76</sup> The authors understand an agreement would need to be reached with the owner of the stretch of the Weirs Stream riverbed adjacent to Redbridge Paddock to allow moorings to be properly established here.

|   |
|---|
| Land purchase   |
| Lease payment   |
| <b>Co-op development</b>  |
| Set-up support  |
| Cost of incorporation   |
| Training  |
| <b>Construction</b>   |
| Dredging (if surveys say is required)   |
| Moorings option 1: Soft verge mooring   |
| Moorings option 2: Intermarine floating pontoons (including land and riverbed survey) |
| Moorings option 3: Trench sheet piling  |
| Moorings option 4: Self-build, fixed staging on legs into the canal bed               |
| Installation of water point/s   |
| Installation of mains electric points (optional)                                      |
| Installation of solar bank (optional)   |
| Elsan facility  |
| Pump out facility (optional)  |
| Refuse disposal area  |
| Cycle storage   |

## 7.3 Outline of potential business model and funding options and opportunities

### 7.3.1 Funding and finance opportunities

Below are some options for raising finance for this project. It is beyond the timeframe of this basic feasibility to explore these models further, but Stage 2 could look into these options in more detail.

#### **i) Finance via the City Council**

- **Joint venture or loan from Oxford City Council / Oxford City Housing Ltd:** The Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment in 2018 recommended agencies ‘consider alternative funding mechanisms such as: acquisition funds; loans for private mooring provision through Community Development Financial Institutions; and joint ventures with members of the boating community”
- **New Homes Bonus:** This could potentially be a source of funding for the City Council. In 2011 Grant Shapps, then Minister of Housing and Local Government,

said: 'While they will never overtake bricks and mortar in putting a roof over the heads of families, innovative new ways of housing families - such as residential moorings - play an important role in allowing people to live near to their place of work, children's school, or family, and where perhaps they would not be able to afford to otherwise....Where houseboats pay council tax, communities will be eligible for the New Homes Bonus, so the potential economic benefits are huge. Landlords, councils and communities all have a clear incentive to get more mooring sites in their areas and not become landlocked in their quest to meet local housing needs'.<sup>77</sup>

## **ii) Finance via the community-led housing movement**

- **Finance / investment from existing coops/community-led housing schemes:** There are long established local housing co-operatives and community-led schemes which may be constitutionally required to invest their surplus into other co-operative housing developments. These could be approached to invest in this project.
- **Radical Routes:** This national network of housing and workers cooperatives, offers loans to their members. Although there have not been any moorings cooperatives in the network before, a new cooperative could make an application to join as a member. Loans tend to be based up to £65,000 over 20 years at an interest rate of 6%.

## **iii) Finance via members and the wider community**

- **Community share offer:** Any groups or mooring registered as a cooperative or community benefit society is eligible to raise investment through issuing shares as a form of equity. This is a great opportunity to gain support from the local community and investors can receive a return on their shares. This can be done through a variety of platforms and providers who manage the investment on behalf of the group; one local investment platform is [Ethex](#).
- **Loanstock:** Finance could be raised from the members themselves, or supporters of the project, through the issuing of loanstock. Usually there would be a set loan period and interest may be paid on repayment of the loan debt depending on the conditions offered. This would only apply to cooperative societies and community benefit societies
- **Loans from private individuals or Trusts:** an example of which is the local trust [OurSanakalpa](#), who have previously given loans to community land or housing projects.

## **iv) Loans from Community Development Financial Institutions**

- **CAF Venturesome** - Offer a Community-Led Housing Fund loan for various stages of development of between £150,000 - £400,000 at an interest rate of between 5 - 10%.
- **Cooperative and Community Finance** - A lender specialising in loans to cooperatives and social enterprises. They tend to award loans of £10,000 to £75,000 but can lend up to £150,000, especially for housing projects. They offer variable terms and interest rates of between 6-10%.
- **Big Issue Invest** - offer a variety of social investments

## **v) Bank loans**

Although they may offer less favourable terms or be less likely to lend to cooperative entities, high street banks and lenders may also be approached for loans. Those that are more focused on lending to enterprises with social benefits are:

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<sup>77</sup> Quoted in: <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/new-homes-crisis-government-wants-more-houseboats>

- [Triodos](#) - offer fixed and variable interest rate loans of between £100,000 and £2 million for up to 25 years
- [Unity Trust Bank](#) - offer variable and fixed interest loans of between £250,000 and £10 million over 20 years.

#### **vi) Grants / non-repayable finance**

Groups may need to first access small amount of non-repayable finance to establish and register their group and/or pay for pre-development surveys and works. Some options are:

- **Crowdfunder** - raise donations through fund-raising events, activities or online crowdfunding platforms
- [Awards for All National Lottery](#) - offers grants of up to £5,000 for community projects and enterprises with a quick application process.
- [UnLtd](#) - offer start up funding of between £5,000 - £15,000 for social enterprises and businesses

## 7.4 Outline of resources and support available, and steps needed, to establish a group or community-owned project

### 7.4.1 Support

There are several local and national organisations which would be able to provide support to a group through advice and connection to wider networks at the various stages of development.

#### **i) Set-up**

- **Collaborative Housing** - Support offered includes:
  - *Start-up phase*: help with forming a group and developing a vision, engaging with stakeholders, building decision-making processes, and setting up organisational and legal structures
  - *Consultation, site and funding phases*: help with carrying out community consultations, acquiring a site and financial planning and accessing funding
  - *Project planning and development phases and Ongoing management*: help with business planning, financial appraisals, advice on project management, liaising with development partners, contractors and local authorities, and signposting to legal and financial services
- **The Hive** - This is a national programme of funded co-op start-up advice and guidance to which groups can apply. It is delivered through consultant providers and administered by Co-ops UK. **Principle Six** is a Hive provider which has built up expertise in mooring co-ops through supporting several with incorporation.
- **Financial advice**: For support with gaining social investment the [Reach Fund](#) could be applied to for a grant to help with 'governance, financial modelling or business planning'. Oxford based social investment body, **Ethex**, is one of the 'access points' through which the co-op would need to apply.
- **Legal advice**: [Wrigleys Solicitors](#) offer a free 20 minute no obligation consultation to all (potential) CLH projects and have recently announced an intention to provide support to community-led moorings.
- **Network coordination**: There has been interest expressed in both the community-owned moorings webinar hosted by Oxfordshire Community Land Trust and the talk by the Inland Waterways Association<sup>78</sup>, for a network or association of community-led moorings and boaters cooperatives. This would collate resources and enable experience and learning to be shared. [Shared Assets](#), a research and advocacy

<sup>78</sup> See <https://waterways.org.uk/support/ways-to-get-involved/events/community-mooring-projects-how-boaters-are-leading-the-way>



think tank on land ownership and management, has previously had an interest in community-owned moorings and may be a useful stakeholder for this work. The [Inland Waterways Association](#) is looking into developing some national guidance for community-run moorings. One of this report's authors have been in touch with them and hope to share the findings for this report.

- **Oxford City Council:** The council can play a crucial role in not just initiating but also supporting the development of the project. This might be through providing support with planning advice, leasing their land holdings and taking a lead in encourage new approaches with other agency partners.

#### 7.4.2 Steps

The following steps provide a rough timeline or process for developing a community-led mooring at the Redbridge site, which includes a multi-agency approach:

##### **i) Pre-development:**

1. The City Council respond to the recommendations in this report
2. The City Council to enter into negotiations with the owner of the riverbed, Richard Burbank, around lease agreement and fees
3. The City Council instruct officers/ engage a consultant to deliver Stage 2 of this project development phase, including:
  - a. A marine survey was carried out to ascertain what preliminary works must be carried out (e.g., dredging), the exact number of moorings possible and any flood mitigation measures needed.
  - b. An in-depth feasibility study including financial viability.
  - c. Input into the masterplan for the Redbridge Paddock site.
  - d. Secure planning advice.

##### **ii) Community Land Trust take control of site:**

4. A transfer is agreed between the City Council and a Community Land Trust (If this cannot be arranged a long-term lease on the site with any necessary terms should be agreed.

##### **iii) Community organising and co-op formation:**

5. Collaborative Housing carry out community organising work within the Oxford boater community.
6. Out of this a boaters community group is formed which aims to work with stakeholders to develop moorings and facilities within the city (e.g., 'Oxford Residential Boaters'). The group need not take on a Society legal form but could be formed as something simpler and quicker such as a CIC.
7. Once a site (e.g., Redbridge) becomes available the group could work with the developer to co-design the project; and with a CLT and Collaborative Housing to co-produce the allocations policy (see above for guidance on allocations and application process) and work up a business plan.
8. The group could then be supported to work through the allocations process to identify the potential residents (who may or may not be part of the original group) who would then be supported to form as a fully mutual co-op (e.g., 'Redbridge Moorings Co-operative Ltd'). As further sites are identified this process could be repeated.

##### **iv) The co-op takes over site management and project development:**

9. The CLT signs a lease/ sub-lease with the newly formed co-op.
10. Capital finance is raised according to the level of need and model chosen. This stage may happen before or after transfer of the site depending on which organisation is best placed to raise finance.
11. Planning application is submitted.

As explained in 7.2.1 iv under 'Timeframe' the following process could then either proceed in advance of, or in concert with, the development of the Redbridge site for housing.

## 7.5 Functioning of the community-led project

The formalisation and management of the community-led mooring project would be structured by the following:

### **i) Legal form**

There is no single legal form in UK law for co-operative businesses. The two types of Registered Society (Community Benefit Society and Co-operative Society) plus Company Limited by Guarantee and Community Interest Company, are all forms which UK co-ops have used. The key ingredient in any co-operative form is reflecting a commitment to the seven co-operative principles<sup>79</sup> within the constitution and governance structure.

Our research into legal forms used by mooring co-ops suggests the Co-operative Society to be the most popular, however examples of companies limited by guarantee, unincorporated associations and trusts were also found.

### **ii) Governance**

There are several sets of 'model rules' (template constitutions) available for the Co-operative Society form. The most commonly used by mooring co-ops appears to be the 'Housing Co-op (General Meeting Governed)' structure developed by the Confederation of Co-operative Housing (CCH) and Co-ops UK<sup>80</sup>. This model is 'fully mutual' in that only tenants can be members and only members can be tenants. This also enshrines governance by general meeting - allowing all co-op members an equal say in the running of the organisation.

Blase Lambert, CEO of CCH, suggested this model is appropriate for housing co-ops up to 40 members - beyond which point a committee structure is recommended. It also gives the co-op the tax benefit of fully mutual trading status and ensures any surplus generated must be ploughed back into the project or used to support other co-operative initiatives.

Sub-committees could be formed with responsibility for different aspects of the co-op's functioning whilst the General Meeting of all members would remain the sovereign body. The society's Secretary would be responsible for maintaining records and sending annual returns to the FCA which regulates societies. General Meetings could take place on a monthly or quarterly basis. Attendance at a minimum number of meetings per year could be a condition of tenancy.

### **iii) Application process**

Mooring spaces would be obtainable via an application and allocation process which would be designed by boaters with support from Collaborative Housing. Some options for this might include:

#### **a) Application process and requirements**

As our Case Studies show, different mooring co-ops have different approaches to admitting new members. However, all have a common commitment to new members being permitted by approval of the existing membership. Some cooperatives may then wish to maintain a waiting list once spaces are full with priority going to those highest on the list. Further possible aspects are:

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<sup>79</sup> See <https://www.uk.coop/understanding-co-ops/what-co-op/co-op-values-and-principles>

<sup>80</sup> See <https://www.uk.coop/sites/default/files/2021-10/2017%20Fully%20Mutual%20Housing%20Co-op%20Model.pdf>

- Applications should specify the length of boat.
- Applicants could also be asked to share what skills and experience (e.g., financial, administrative, boat engineering, DIY etc) they would bring to the co-op.
- One option would be to require proof of an Oxford local connection.
- Some cooperatives require a certain work commitment of a number of hours over a specified length of time (e.g., 8 hours per month).
- Applicants could be required to attend a specified number of group meetings in order to qualify for consideration.

#### **b) A ballot to form the initial group**

[Community Moorings Scotland](#) have used a ballot system to fairly allocate new mooring spaces on their first site when it opens. Prospective members are invited to apply and if they are eligible, they are entered into a ballot. Those drawn are allocated moorings. After this draw new prospective members can join a waiting list. The value of a ballots system is that it can help avoid conflict within the start-up group relating to allocation of moorings. The ballot could only be open to those who have been active within the group (e.g., have attended a minimum number of meetings).

#### **iv) Tenancy agreements**

All tenants would be required to sign a tenancy agreement with the co-op which would outline the responsibilities of each party. This could include stipulations such as maintaining boats in a clean and tidy condition, limiting engine noise and processes for dealing with breaking the terms of the agreement. The case studies in Section 5.2 give examples of some established co-op's requirements. The fact that the Rotheram and Sheffield Canal Association, featured in the case studies, have recently had their lease extended to 15 years suggests a high level of satisfaction from CRT with their management of the site.

## Section 7 - Conclusions and recommendations

This report is a first stage to set out options for the potential transfer of the mooring site for a community led moorings development:

- That the following work is undertaken at the potential Redbridge moorings:
  - A marine survey carried out to ascertain what preliminary works must be carried out (e.g., dredging), the exact number of moorings possible and any flood mitigation measures needed.
  - An in- depth feasibility *study including a fully costed business model*. This will need to be based on agreement with OCC into the extent of the moorings site and preferred option for transferring the land to a community led group.
  - A decision on delivery timings for the mooring site
  - A funding plan to support the development of a boater's group who can take this work forwards.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Full report of the Community-led Moorings Survey

The Community-led Moorings survey of boaters was publicised informally through known boaters Facebook groups / pages, Whatsapp groups and on Daily Info. The survey was accepting responses for 4 weeks.

We had 39 responses to the survey.

### 1. How many people live on your boat?

- 67% of (26 respondents) had 1 person living on their boat
- 31% (12 respondents) had 2 people living on their boat
- 2% (1 respondent) had 3 people living on their boat

### 2. What type of boat is it?

- 35 Narrowboats
- 1 Widebeams
- 3 dutch barges
- 0 GRP boat

### 3. Current mooring arrangement / location

- 12 respondents have a permanent / residential mooring through the Canal & River Trust
- 3 respondents have a permanent / residential mooring on private land
- 20 respondents continuously cruise  
Of these respondents:
  - 3 also use or plan to use winter moorings
  - 3 also have a leisure mooring they can use for part of the year (as long as it is not their sole residence)
  - 1 also has another arrangement to use private land
  - 2 also 'stay long term on the bits [they are] seemingly allowed to'
- 4 respondents have other arrangements including:
  - 1 respondent uses a leisure mooring
  - 1 respondent rents their boat (although no information is given about the location of the boat)
  - 1 respondent is on 'indefinite moorings'
  - 1 respondent has access to a winter mooring with their job at a boatyard

### 4. Please tell us more about your current arrangement / location

- 37% were mostly on the river
- 50% were mostly on the canal
- 13% were mostly between both

In terms of cruising patterns, 5 people reported cruising across the Thames and canal, including between Banbury and Abingdon, with one person cruising as far as the Oxford / Coventry junction on the canal. 2 of these people mention staying on the canal or near Abingdon in winter (presumably because of proximity to services).

General comments about conditions on Oxford's waterways can be summarised into themes:

- **3 respondents mentioned the poor access to facilities:**
  - "I cannot stress how much we could do with a water point [...] near Donnington Bridge. I cannot go to the canal as too big and can't go to Abingdon during red boards. I am currently filtering river water as no alternative."
  - "I used to continuously cruise but it's too much hard work alone in winter and the service points are so badly maintained it makes it more difficult"
  - "In the winter I would like to stay on the river if there were places to moor with facilities, but there are no water taps or public elsans in the city centre so have recently (especially with hygiene considerations due to covid) I have gone on the canal during winter. The winter moorings are really limited too though, and not spaces I'd ideally moor in."
- **2 respondents mentioned limited mooring spaces, especially for cruisers:**
  - "We continuously cruise between the canal and Thames [...] This is harder to do in Oxford than anywhere else as there are lots of '2 day' only moorings."
  - "I have lived on the boat in Oxford for five years and it's more and more difficult to find moorings, because the number of boats has increased and because the mooring spots have decreased, or you have to pay for them."
  - I am technically continuously cruising [...] However, as this section of the river is un-navigable safely in the winter / flooding months, I cannot move my boat off the mooring during those times."
- 1 respondent stated: "I look after my children on alternate days and it's very important that I can stay moored near where they live."

## 5. Would you be interested in any of the following within Oxford city

- 31 respondents were interested in a permanent mooring
  - Interestingly 17 of these were continuous cruisers so 85% of those who said they continuously cruise were interested in a permanent mooring
  - 11 of these had previously said they had a permanent residential mooring through the CRT or on private land or 73% with an existing mooring - this might mean that they either would intend to stay on permanent moorings or are dissatisfied with their current arrangement and would prefer another kind of permanent mooring
- 11 respondents were interested in visitor moorings
  - Just under half (5 respondents) of those interested in visitor moorings were continuous cruisers - this might point to a demand for more temporary moorings for continuous cruisers as a lower priority than more permanent mooring or an alternative interpretation might be that those with permanent moorings or other more long-term arrangements might be more willing to cruise if there were more temporary moorings.
- 22 respondents were interested in winter moorings

- 15 of these were continuous cruisers - so 75% of continuous cruisers were interested in winter moorings
- 25 respondents were interested in access to facilities but no mooring
  - 15 of these were continuous cruisers or had another arrangement that was 'indefinite' - so 60% of continuous cruisers seem to want more access to services.
  - 7 of these already had existing moorings which suggest that some feel the facilities they have with their mooring are not adequate or they want different services.
- 1 respondent said they were interested in any of the above
- There were also the following other interests stated:
  - For my existing [leisure] mooring to be given residential status
  - Business mooring [for teaching arts and crafts]
  - A dry dock or slipway access for hull maintenance
  - A postbox for the Wolvercote section of Agenda 21
  - 14-day moorings in the City as at present CRT notices only allow 48 hours

## 6. What facilities would you want access to on any new moorings?

In order or priority:

- Water point - 100% of respondents (39) - *Specifically one respondent said they would like for there to be a tap at Donnington Bridge*
- Recycling / General waste bins - 97% of respondents (38)
- Elsan - 85% of respondents (33)
- Food waste recycling - 74% of respondents (29)
- Garden / growing space / play space - 74% of respondents (29)
- Shared / community space - 74% of respondents (29)
- Shared laundry facilities - 72% of respondents (28)
- Postbox / postal address - 72% of respondents (28)
- Temporary space for doing DIY work on boats - 59% of respondents (23)
- Shed / storage - 59% of respondents (23)
- Car parking - 44% of respondents (17)
- Shared toilet / shower block - 38% of respondents (15)
- Electric hookup - 33% of respondents (13)
- Shared Wifi - 26% of respondents (10)
- Pump out - 23% of respondents (9)

Other facilities respondents stated they would like:

- Composting for compost toilet (3 respondents)
- Secure bike shelter (3 respondent)
- Disabled access (1 respondent)
- Fuel sale - diesel, gas, coal, wood (1 respondent)
- Covered areas with lines to dry washing (1 respondent)
- Renewable power plant for electric hook up (1 respondent)
- Community woodstore (1 respondent)
- Dry dock or slipway access for hull maintenance (1 respondent)
- Electric car share (1 respondent)
- Sheltered outdoor seating (1 respondent)
- Hazardous waste collection - engine oil, old paint etc. (1 respondent)

- Power sockets at the DIY area (1 respondent)
- Food waste composting (1 respondent)
- Shared kitchen (1 respondent)

### 7. What would be an affordable monthly rent for a permanent mooring for you?

- Up to £200 - 41% of respondents (16)
- Up to £400 - 49% of respondents (19)
- Up to £600 - 7% of respondents (3)
- Up to £1000 - 3% 1 respondent (the same respondent also said they'd be prepared to pay over over £1000)

### 8. Would you be interested in principle to contribute time / skills as part of a group or cooperative to set up and/or manage your own mooring?

- 62% (24 respondents) - Yes
- 36% (14 respondents) - Maybe
- 2% (1 respondent) - No

Comments about interest in community-led moorings can be summarised into general themes:

- **46% expressed positivity towards participation and being part of a community**
  - 6 respondents expressed that they had relevant skills and experiences in community or charitable projects (both practical / DIY or organisational) - "I think contributing time and skills to the community is something we naturally do as boaters anyway. And we have all the skills we need to manage our own moorings"
  - 8 respondents expressed being 'passionate' about community-led projects or that they wanted to be part of a 'community'
  - 4 respondents talked about putting 'positive action into your living space' and wanting to have 'autonomy over a space' and 'ownership'
- **10% expressed positivity due to lack of affordable alternatives or control over housing situation**
  - 1 respondent said they were 'priced out of permanent moorings'
  - 3 made comments about the 'unjust' 'property dynamics' in Oxford and the desire to address this or 'put the power to self-manage living arrangements into the hands of the people that live there' or 'have our needs met through our own resourcing'
- **10% expressed positivity due to not feeling served by other authorities or mooring providers**
  - 3 expressed concerns specifically about their CRT moorings including that they "are more and more expensive"; that 'boaters deserve better moorings and facilities'; and that the original 'principles' of the mooring were being 'eroded'. One said that 'A community-managed or -owned mooring would enable us to 'return to our roots' and restore the moorings to their original intention'
  - 1 respondent said more provision for continuous cruisers is needed and that authorities had made any progress on this: "a transient community [...] needs more options if they are to live in line with their cc status. Move, yes, but move to where?"

- **35% expressed uncertainty due to personal circumstances or affordability:**
  - The 1 respondent who answered 'no' and 2 respondents who said maybe because they weren't permanently in Oxford or not sure about long term plans
  - 6 said they had limited time due to work or caring commitments
  - 2 said only if the time / work / cost was manageable or weighed against the time boats already take to maintain
  - 2 said they'd struggle to afford even the lowest amount of rent
  - 1 said maybe as already had a mooring
- **10% expressed uncertainty because of potential challenges:**
  - 1 respondent said that as the 'current setup for the permanent Oxford residents is free (on cc [continuous cruising] licences but permanently moored on the river), so think the idea is unlikely to get traction unless things change with that'
  - 1 said they thought the initiative would face challenges with the council
  - 3 expressed concerns about potential group dynamics including about all the work falling on their shoulders, that it might be 'hard work', or if their values would be aligned / they could trust the group

One comment is worth including in full:

*"I have worked as an advocate for the liveaboard community (my community!) and the Gypsy and Traveller communities for the last 7 years with a number of charities both locally and nationally [...] I know how much moorings are sought after and how due to the CRT bidding policy, the people who need them most always loose out. I would like to see a well-run community mooring CIC in Oxford, much like the one in Birmingham, Urban Moorings CIC [...] I can bring lots of skills to the table. I am currently also trying to return the boatyard I work in to being more of a community-based service. The boating community has great strength and there is more strength in unified community. Canals have become living spaces but that should be inclusive and not just for wealthy retired 'shiny' boaters! The boating community needs local hubs and support to help people be able to live on the canal and not become marginalised or forgotten. A good visible example of a community mooring project is valuable not just locally but nationally, as it can be replicated"*

## 9. Next steps

85% of respondents wanted to hear more or be linked up with other boaters interested in community-led moorings



## Appendix 2: Examples of Community led moorings nationally

| Name & Website  | Stage of development   | Legal Form/ Governance structure  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Surge</b> , Bow Creek, London<br><a href="https://www.surge.coop/">https://www.surge.coop/</a>   | Set up stage. Registered as a co-op 2019   | Co-op Society. Fully Mutual Co-operative Housing Model Rules.   |
| <b>Urban Mooring</b> , Birmingham<br><a href="https://urbanmoorings.co.uk/">https://urbanmoorings.co.uk/</a>                                    | Unknown  | CIC   |
| <b>Hermitage Community Moorings</b> , River Thames, London<br><a href="http://www.hermitagemoorings.com/">http://www.hermitagemoorings.com/</a> | Up and running since 2011.   | IPS - Co-op   |
| <b>Liverpool Boaters Community Ltd</b> , Liverpool  | Set up stage. Registered as a company Feb 2021   | Company Limited by Guarantee with Co-op Rules.  |
| <b>River Roding Trust</b> , River Roding, London<br><a href="https://riverrodingtrust.org.uk/">https://riverrodingtrust.org.uk/</a>             | Charity established in 2019.   | Registered Charity.<br>Most trustees are boaters - some local residents.  |
| <b>Bow Creek Moorings</b> , Bow Creek, London<br><a href="https://www.bowcreekmoorings.co.uk/">https://www.bowcreekmoorings.co.uk/</a>          | Incorporated May 2021  | Housing Co-operative (General Meeting Governed) Model Rules.  |
| <b>Poplar Harca</b> , London<br><a href="https://www.poplarharca.co.uk/">https://www.poplarharca.co.uk/</a>                                     | CRT Business Manager, Tom Jackson, said in Sept 2021 this had taken 4 years. Unclear whether they are now established. | Poplar Harca is a Housing and Regeneration Community Association in East London. They are developing moorings adjacent to residential property in London.   |
| <b>Narrowboat Farm</b> , Union Canal, Scotland<br><a href="https://narrowboatfarm.com/about-us/">https://narrowboatfarm.com/about-us/</a>       | Up and running since 2017.   | Pilot project of 'Community Moorings Scotland' who exist to 'set up a model for community-owned canal boat moorings that could be rolled out across the lowland canals and beyond'.<br><br>CMS is a 'SCIO': Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation |

|   |         |  |
|---|---------|--|
| <b>Lock Marina</b> , River Cam, Cambridgeshire<br><a href="http://www.lock-marina.com/">http://www.lock-marina.com/</a> | Unknown | Company Limited by Guarantee with Co-operative governance. |
|---|---------|--|

## Appendix 3: Table of Sites

### Key to abbreviations:

*BDNA = OCC Boat Dwellers Needs Assessment 2018*

*HELAA = OCC The Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment 2019*

*RSOW = OCC Review of sections of Oxford's Waterways 2012*

*IWA = Inland Waterways Association*

*EA = Environment Agency*

*CRT - Canal & River Trust*

| Site   | Redbridge Paddock, Iffley Weir Stream   | Castle Mill Stream, Jericho  | Abbey Road  |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Location (link to map / coordinates)</b>  | 51.730668, -1.246679<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/JM72vfRrsh8cWA6v8">https://goo.gl/maps/JM72vfRrsh8cWA6v8</a> | 51.757639, -1.270741<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/UP8CzQ3uWDAsbFxs5">https://goo.gl/maps/UP8CzQ3uWDAsbFxs5</a>                              | 51.754873, -1.271818<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/314DvEY2ryNYfcLH7">https://goo.gl/maps/314DvEY2ryNYfcLH7</a> |
| <b>Waterway</b>  | River Thames  | River Thames   | River Thames  |
| <b>Length of bank</b>  | 463 m (200 - 300 m suitable for mooring)  | 266 m (Network Rail land starts opposite St Barnabas Church and continues up stream. The land downstream to Sheepwash channel is owned by CRT) | 231 m (leaving space either end to comply with recommendation of no moorings within 45 metre of bridge)           |
| <b>Arrangement of mooring to waterway e.g offline / online / marina / side channel</b> | Side channel  | Side channel, online to canal towpath  | Main channel, online to footpath  |
| <b>Current use</b>   | Rented for grazing and one mooring  | Unregulated moorings   | Mooring not currently permitted there. Has historically been used as unregulated moorings.                        |

|  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Landowner</b>   | Oxford City Council  | Network Rail  | Unregistered land. Claim that it is owned by Christ Church College was refuted. <sup>81</sup>  |
| <b>Land value / desirability</b>                                       | Site is a proposed location for housing development. A feasibility study has been done finding it suitable for development. <sup>82</sup>  | Land holding includes mill stream and thin strips of land either side. No other potential use than mooring due to the nature of site.   | Although there have been reported complaints from previous use as unregulated moorings if properly managed it could provide. Due to close proximity to residential area would need relationship building and clear agreements about noise / running engines etc. |
| <b>Proposed by</b>   | Local Plan   | Existing boaters group & RSOW, BDNA   | Researcher   |
| <b>Suitability for mooring / Type of mooring</b>                       | Permanent residential mooring proposed in Local Plan. Could also be suitable for a mixture of permanent, extended temporary and winter moorings. Proximity to the main river would make it a good location for additional facilities / services for continuous cruisers using the river. Desirable location between residential areas of East Oxford and South Oxford. Surrounded by nature by some noise and pollution from nearby ring road. | Permanent residential moorings proposed. Already used as moorings. Desirable central location close to city centre. Not immediately adjacent to any other residences. Some may find noise from the adjacent railway less desirable.   | Due to its position on main Thames, it is assumed that permanent residential mooring would not be permitted by EA. Extended temporary moorings or winter mooring could be possible.  |
| <b>Boat capacity</b>   | Up to 20   | Up to 18  | Up to 15   |
| <b>Level of development required e.g dredging, bank works, bridges</b> | It is currently navigable but some dredging and removing of debris may be required to make it more accessible. It is reported to flood in winter meaning that a more natural approach to bank works / floating pontoons may be required. Access under the bridge may be restricted when the river is very high.  | It is currently navigable and reported to be 3 metres deep in some places but some dredging of silt build up and removing of debris from trees may be required to make it more accessible. The bridge at the entrance to the stream from Sheepwash Channel would need to be raised as currently boats can only gain access when the river is lower. | It is currently maintained as a navigable waterway. There are already stabilised banks in some places but more work to determine depth along banks may be needed.  |

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/11460173.fears-boat-owners-group-claims-new-area-riverbank/>

<sup>82</sup> [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/7411/redbridge\\_paddock\\_feasibility\\_study](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/7411/redbridge_paddock_feasibility_study)

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Services &amp; connectivity inc. proximity to utilities</b>     | There is presumably a water point on the site due to it being used for horses. Additional services to the site would be installed as part of the wider site development.   | There are currently no services on the site. There could be connection to utilities from nearby William Lucy housing estate. CRT have waterpoints and electricity on nearby moorings the other side of Sheepwash Channel on the canal demonstrating the potential for connectivity.  | There could be connection to utilities from nearby Abbey Road. Electricity points may be desirable to minimise noise / pollution from engines being run for power. If being used as a winter mooring close access to water and sewage disposal would be needed in case of winter stoppages / flooding restricting boat movement to gain access to services. There is a water and Elsan point at the nearby Isis Lock accessible only to boaters with a canal licence - however access to this service could be negotiated. |
| <b>Navigation impact inc. restriction of other waterways users</b> | Not listed as a navigable waterway by the IWA so no impact on public navigation. There are no public footpaths over the land.  | Not listed as a navigable waterway by the IWA so no impact on public navigation. The offline bank of the stream is not currently publicly accessible. The towpath on the online bank is under the authority of the CRT. An easement may need to be negotiated with the CRT as their land would need to be passed in order to access the mooring. | Listed as a navigable waterway by IWA. The towpath along the river is very narrow in places and so there would need to be restrictions on the use of the bank to prevent obstructions to pedestrians.  |
| <b>Adequate emergency services access</b>                          | Yes (also ensured by planning of wider housing development) From A414  | TBC - potential access from William Lucy Way or Rewley Rd.   | TBC - potential access from Abbey Rd   |
| <b>Accessibility inc. easements, transport links</b>               | Would need to ensure pedestrian access / easement over housing development with potential for additional vehicle access / parking unless development is designated car-free. Less than 300 metres to local bus routes. | Pedestrian access via towpath. No direct vehicle parking/access. Less than 200 metres from Oxford Train Station and bus links.   | Pedestrian access via towpath. No direct vehicle parking/access. Less than 500 metres from Oxford Train Station and bus links.   |
| <b>Environmental / biodiversity impacts</b>                        | Current boater reports the existence of water voles and has planted 85 trees to increase the biodiversity <sup>83</sup> . Adjacent to Iffley Meadows, a nature reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest.        | RSOW report suggested: 'potential for water voles so an ecological survey would be required'. It also said: 'Both banks are in an overgrown / natural condition. Increased activity could undermine the integrity of the banks [...] Vegetation management would also  | The land is adjacent to allotment land. Further ecological surveys would be needed.  |

<sup>83</sup> <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/18668437.spare-thought-nature-says-resident-housing-plans-redbridge-paddock/>

|   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
|   | Further ecological surveys would be needed.   | be needed'. Further ecological surveys would be needed.   |  |
| <b>Flood Risk</b>                                       | Flood Risk Zone 2 and Zone 3. Known to flood in recent years.   | Flood Risk Zone 2   | Flood Risk Zone 2  |
| <b>Other planning considerations</b>                    | Site is a former landfill, which has implications for design and construction. Further consideration to how the moorings fit within the timeline and overall design of the wider housing is needed. | Has certificate of lawful use for 2 moorings. The nearby Jericho Wharf area is earmarked for development which could offer a coordinated development for the area. The area around the Castle Mill Stream has historically been a boatyard and been inhabited by those working and living on the waterways. | Close proximity to other residential properties and past complaints may mean that there may be local resistance and/or planning permission may not be awarded. |
| <b>Potential / feasibility of community-led mooring</b> | High potential. Development timeline may be medium to long term in line with wider site development > 5 years.  | High potential. Development timeline could be short to medium term  | Low potential  |

| <b>Site</b>  | <b>Oxpens</b>   | <b>Fiddlers Island, Port Meadow</b>   | <b>Long Bridges</b>   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Location (link to map / coordinates)</b>  | 51.746516, -1.263744<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/FjjNun7V1MdTHgry9">https://goo.gl/maps/FjjNun7V1MdTHgry9</a> | 51.763259, -1.279164<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/2hgTrCzeW8Huhxrc9">https://goo.gl/maps/2hgTrCzeW8Huhxrc9</a> | 51.737620, -1.246198<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/K8frqKGq6vJ8twMp6">https://goo.gl/maps/K8frqKGq6vJ8twMp6</a> |
| <b>Waterway</b>  | River Thames  | River Thames  | <b>River Thames</b>   |
| <b>Length of bank</b>  | 230 m along Castle Mill Stream  | 186 m   | 130 m (avoiding weir)   |
| <b>Arrangement of mooring to waterway e.g offline / online / marina / side channel</b> | Side channel, online to bank<br><br>An option for a marina within the Oxpens site could also be considered        | Marina (with pontoons)  | Side channel of river (Weir Stream). Online to either side Longbridges Nature Park                                |

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| <b>Current use</b>   | Public park. Mooring not currently permitted there.  | Leisure marina managed by Bossoms boatyard   | Nature reserve. Local bathing spot. Not currently used for moorings                     |
| <b>Landowner</b>   | Oxford City Council<br><br>(Part of the bank downstream of the railway bridge is owned by Network Rail)  | Oxford City Council  | Oxford City Council   |
| <b>Land value / desirability</b>                                       | Local Plan allocated site due to be redeveloped for a mixture of residential and business use. <sup>84</sup>   | No other potential use than mooring due to the nature of the site.   | Not designated for other development due to green belt status                           |
| <b>Proposed by</b>   | Researcher   | Researcher   | BDNA  |
| <b>Suitability for mooring / Type of mooring</b>                       | Permanent residential mooring could be created on the Mill Stream. Otherwise temporary or winter mooring may be possible on the main river.<br>There could be an opportunity to include a marina by creating a basin for permanent resident use as part of the wider site development. Desirable central Oxford location. Consideration would be needed for proximity to existing housing around Friars Wharf and new residential development planned. | Currently used as leisure mooring may be an opportunity to extend the use to include permanent residential moorings. | Could be suitable for permanent residential mooring if designed sensitively, low impact |
| <b>Boat capacity</b>   | Up to 15   | TBC - boats arranged on pontoons. Approx 29 based on aerial photos   | Up to 9   |
| <b>Level of development required e.g dredging, bank works, bridges</b> | The Castle Mill stream would need dredging to make it a suitable depth for mooring. Further investigation needed to determine if the bridge over the Castle Mill Stream would need to be raised. If a marina option was chosen it would need significant infrastructure works.   | Mooring infrastructure already in place but may need upgrades if moorings are residential.                           | Unknown - Surveys needed  |

<sup>84</sup> [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20182/regeneration\\_and\\_development/950/oxpens\\_development](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20182/regeneration_and_development/950/oxpens_development)

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| <b>Services &amp; connectivity inc. proximity to utilities</b>     | There could be connectivity to the site as part of the wider Oxpens development.  | There are some services on the site already, but these are likely to need extending of upgrading to suit residential use. There was a suggestion from the Council Officer that there had been preliminary plans to repair and develop facilities at Port Meadow anyway. | Services may be connected from nearby Long Bridges Boat House   |
| <b>Navigation impact inc. restriction of other waterways users</b> | The Castle Mill Stream is not listed as a navigable waterway by the IWA so no impact on public navigation.  | Marina off main navigable waterway so no navigation impact. Has been a suggestion to install a fence to prevent pedestrian access / anti-social behaviour which has been unpopular with users of the marina. <sup>85</sup>  | Not listed as a navigable waterway by the IWA so no impact on public navigation. May have an impact on leisure enjoyment of the nature park and bathing place.  |
| <b>Adequate emergency services access</b>                          | Yes - access from A420  | Yes - from Walton Well car park or Binsey   | Yes - vehicles can gain access along Thames path or over Cowmead Allotment depending on which bank chosen   |
| <b>Accessibility inc. easements, transport links</b>               | Pedestrian access from A420. Potential for additional vehicle access / parking as part of wider development.  | Pedestrian access from public right of way across Port Meadow and River Thames footpath. No vehicle access / parking due to nature of Port Meadow   | Pedestrian access from Thames footpath or Cowmead Allotments  |
| <b>Environmental / biodiversity impacts</b>                        | Adjacent to conservation area. Assumed surveys have been conducted as part of wider Oxpens development that would be applicable.  | Port Meadow is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Further ecological surveys would be needed.   | As green belt land the site is currently "protected for its importance in local nature conservation, so may need substantial biodiversity mitigation measures" (HPAA)   |
| <b>Flood Risk</b>  | Sections of the site are in Flood Zone 3b and Flood Zone 3a   | Flood Risk Zone 3   | Flood Zone 3b   |
| <b>Other planning considerations</b>                               | Due to sections of the site being in a flood zone 3 area it would need to pass an 'exceptional test' for residential use. Creating moorings, which are allowed as permitted development, could enable these sections of the site to be used residentially. Moorings have not been included in the master plan for the site and so it may be too late for this to be incorporated. | There is planning permission for one residential mooring space at Bossom so there may be grounds for extension of this permission to allow for more spaces.   | May be unlikely to be granted planning permission due to status as green belt, even if the moorings were designed to be low impact. May also attract opposition from users of the nature park and bathing spot. |

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/19014461.boaters-call-port-meadow-fence-plan-stopped/>

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| <b>Potential / feasibility of community-led mooring</b> | Medium potential | Medium potential | Low potential |
|---|------------------|------------------|---------------|

| <b>Site</b>  | <b>Fiddler Island / Stream</b>  | <b>Godstow Bridge</b>   | <b>Dukes Cut Reservoir, Wolvercote Mill Stream</b>  |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Location (link to map / coordinates)</b>  | 51.760489, -1.277102<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/zEv1KyfAhrZKajUD9">https://goo.gl/maps/zEv1KyfAhrZKajUD9</a>   | 51.780657, -1.301778<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/y9g9uKhDJaedQUCo7">https://goo.gl/maps/y9g9uKhDJaedQUCo7</a>   | 51.789968, -1.295802<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/AbEeVtcHQyA4Tx8y7">https://goo.gl/maps/AbEeVtcHQyA4Tx8y7</a> |
| <b>Waterway</b>  | River Thames  | River Thames  | River Thames  |
| <b>Length of bank</b>  | 500 m (section downstream is adjoining university land)   | 138 m   | 864 m (circumference)   |
| <b>Arrangement of mooring to waterway e.g offline / online / marina / side channel</b> | Main thames. Online to footpath   | Main thames. Offline to footpath  | Side channel basin from Dukes Cut / Castle Mill Stream  |
| <b>Current use</b>   | Managed by OCC as 48 hour moorings. Land inland is OCC managed wildlife area.   | Leisure moorings (management / arrangements unknown)  | Former quarry and previously used for angling but now access is restricted.                                       |
| <b>Landowner</b>   | Oxford City Council   | Oxford Preservation Trust   | Environment Agency  |
| <b>Land value / desirability</b>   | Not designated for other development due to flood risk and wildlife status.   | Not designated for other development due to green belt / wildlife corridor status   | Not designated for other development due to flood risk  |
| <b>Proposed by</b>   | Researcher  | Researcher  | BDNA  |
| <b>Suitability for mooring / Type of mooring</b>                                       | Due to its position on main Thames, it is assumed that permanent residential mooring would not be permitted by EA. Extended temporary moorings or winter mooring could be possible. | Due to its position on main Thames, it is assumed that permanent residential mooring would not be permitted by EA. Some / all of the existing leisure mooring could be converted into extended temporary moorings or winter moorings. | Could be suitable to be developed into a marina due to the size and nature of the reservoir.                      |
| <b>Boat capacity</b>   | Up to 33  | Up to 9   | Up to 57 (if around circumference)  |



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| <b>Level of development required e.g dredging, bank works, bridges</b> | Is currently navigable and used for temporary moorings so assumed that little work would be needed.  | Is currently navigable and used for leisure moorings so assumed that little work would be needed.                       | The reservoir is very deep and may need infilling to make safe to moor. Would need considerable works to construct an entrance from the canal or Dukes Cut / Castle Mill Stream. Would need pontoons or bank work to create moorings depending on the design |
| <b>Services &amp; connectivity inc. proximity to utilities</b>         | Services may be connected from nearby Castle Mill housing development. If being used as a winter mooring close access to water and sewage disposal would be needed in case of winter stoppages / flooding restricting boat movement to gain access to services. There are water and sewage points at the nearby Isis Lock (accessible only to boaters with a canal licence) and at the private Port Meadow mooring - however access to these services could be negotiated. | Unknown what services are currently provided for the leisure moorings. Services may be connected from nearby Trout Inn. | May be challenging to connect to mains services due to location surrounded by roads, river and the canal. More surveys would be needed.  |
| <b>Navigation impact inc. restriction of other waterways users</b>     | Listed as a navigable waterway by IWA. The towpath along the river is very narrow in places and so there would need to be restrictions on the use of the bank to prevent obstructions to pedestrians.  | Listed as a navigable waterway by IWA. There is currently no pedestrian access / public footpath to this land.          | Not listed as a navigable waterway. Currently no public access to the site.  |
| <b>Adequate emergency services access</b>                              | TBC - assuming vehicle access on Thames Path is suitable   | Yes - from Godstow Rd   | TBC - potential from A34 sliproad  |
| <b>Accessibility inc. easements, transport links</b>                   | Pedestrian access from Thames footpath.  | Pedestrian access from behind the Wolvercote Community Orchard.   | Access would need to be created either pedestrian access from the canal towpath, and/or vehicle access from A34 slip road  |
| <b>Environmental / biodiversity impacts</b>                            | Adjacent to wildlife area. Ecological surveys needed.  | Listed as wildlife corridor. Ecological surveys needed.   | Unknown - Ecological surveys needed.   |
| <b>Flood Risk</b>  | Flood Zone 3b  | Flood Zone 3b   | Flood Zone 3   |

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| <b>Other planning considerations</b>                    | There are no nearby residential houses making it a more suitable location than the nearby Abbey Rd for example.                               | There is presumably planning permission / a permit from the EA for leisure moorings, which could feasibly be extended. | As there are no nearby residential developments or other potential uses for the area except wildlife conservation this could be an ideal location for a marina |
| <b>Potential / feasibility of community-led mooring</b> | Medium potential. Development timeline could be short term as works required may be less intensive for extended temporary or winter moorings. | Low potential  | Medium potential. Development timeline would be long-term due to difficulty of site and expense of development works   |

| Site   | Land adjacent to Wolvercote Allotments  | Bullstake Stream  | Hinksey Stream South  |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Location (link to map / coordinates)</b>  | 51.780753, -1.280578<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/T9ibRctfiPB7pdyS9">https://goo.gl/maps/T9ibRctfiPB7pdyS9</a> | 51.746734, -1.267762<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/LUor5BGmycJuJLJR9">https://goo.gl/maps/LUor5BGmycJuJLJR9</a> | 51.725253, -1.246654<br><a href="https://goo.gl/maps/Emj2DdFW395zUATz6">https://goo.gl/maps/Emj2DdFW395zUATz6</a> |
| <b>Waterway</b>  | Oxford Canal  | River Thames  | River Thames  |
| <b>Length of bank</b>  | 40 m  | 440 m (along Osney Mead Estate)   | 600 m   |
| <b>Arrangement of mooring to waterway e.g offline / online / marina / side channel</b> | Offline Oxford Canal  | Side channel. Online to Osney Mead  | Side channel  |
| <b>Current use</b>   | Greenfield adjacent to allotment. Not currently used for mooring  | Not known to be previously used for moorings. Stream between greenfield and industrial estate.                    | Not known. Greenfield land / nature reserve. Unknown if moorings take place here.                                 |
| <b>Landowner</b>   | Oxford City Council   | Oxford University (OCC are stakeholders in the redevelopment)   | Oxford City Council   |
| <b>Land value / desirability</b>   | Not designated for other development due to flood risk, lack of vehicle access                                    | Earmarked for regeneration as mixed residential and business development <sup>86</sup>                            | Not designated for other development due to flood risk  |
| <b>Proposed by</b>   | Researcher  | Researcher  | RSOW report   |

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/building-our-future/vision/master-plan-areas/osney>

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| <b>Suitability for mooring / Type of mooring</b>                       | Suitable for permanent residential or winter moorings   | Opportunity for permanent residential moorings on the Bullstake Stream as part of the wider development.<br>There is currently a marina next to Osney Lock adjoining the estate ( <a href="#">see map</a> ) which is used as a depot by the EA for service boats. If this site is part of the wider area to be redeveloped there is potential for this to become a residential marina. | Potential for permanent residential moorings. Could be developed to be managed as part of the Redbridge site with boats having access to facilities installed there.                           |
| <b>Boat capacity</b>   | Up to 3   | Up to 29   | Up to 40   |
| <b>Level of development required e.g dredging, bank works, bridges</b> | Is currently navigable but dredging may be needed on the offline bank to allow mooring  | The RSOW report said: “there are concerns about the depth of the channel – some dredging may be required. There were also concerns raised about the integrity of the bank in its current form to support moorings. Further study would be required.”<br>The bridge over the stream would need to be raised to allow access   | The waterway is currently navigable, but more surveys would be needed to determine if additional works are required. Access under the bridge may be restricted when the river is very high.    |
| <b>Services &amp; connectivity inc. proximity to utilities</b>         | Services may be connected from nearby housing. Users would have also have access to facilities on the canal as licence holders.   | Services would be connected as part of the wider site redevelopment  | Due to the location between the road and river it would be difficult to install services. However, if the Redbridge site was developed as moorings, boats could gain access to services there. |
| <b>Navigation impact inc. restriction of other waterways users</b>     | Listed as a navigable waterway by IWA. As the canal is narrow there would not be able to be moorings on both banks. Currently there is no mooring on the opposite online bank There is currently no pedestrian access / public footpath to this land. | Not listed as a navigable waterway by the IWA so no impact on public navigation. There is a public footpath on the opposite side of the stream   | Not listed as a navigable waterway by the IWA so no impact on public navigation. The land may be accessible by public footpath.  |
| <b>Adequate emergency services access</b>                              | TBC - vehicle access would be through the allotment   | Yes - from Osney Mead  | TBC - From River Thames path   |

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| <b>Accessibility inc. easements, transport links</b>    | Pedestrian access would need to be created through allotments.   | Pedestrian and vehicle access from Osney Mead. Possibility to create car park as part of development     | Pedestrian access from the Thames Path  |
| <b>Environmental / biodiversity impacts</b>             | Adjacent to wildlife reserve. Ecological surveys needed.   | RSOW report said that the site is 'of some ecological value'   | Unclear if site is a designated nature reserve. Ecological surveys would be needed  |
| <b>Flood Risk</b>                                       | Flood zone 3b  | Flood Zone 2   | Flood Risk Zone 2 / 3   |
| <b>Other planning considerations</b>                    | Would be ideal for winter moorings due to being on canal   | There is an excellent opportunity to develop residential moorings as part of the wider site development. | The RSOW report also suggested the Hinskey Stream north of Abingdon Road. This section of the stream has not been included in this study due to it not being known to be navigable from a main waterway |
| <b>Potential / feasibility of community-led mooring</b> | Medium potential. Development timeline could be short to medium term as might need little infrastructure development | Low potential  | Medium potential. Development timeline would be long-term due to difficulty of site and expense of development works  |

