

Canal and River Licences



INTRODUCTION

This Canal and River Licences factsheet updates and replaces the version coded FS 120152 April 1993. The factsheet specifically refers to England and Wales. For information on Scotland and Northern Ireland, contact Scottish Scout Headquarters and Northern Ireland Scout Headquarters.

The factsheet provides a schedule for the access to inland waters in England and Wales with references to the local authorities to be contacted for permission and licences where appropriate.

Further editions will be published as necessary due to notified changes relating to the issuing of licences. The issue of replacement factsheets will be notified in SCOUTING Magazine, Talking Points and the Activities Newsletter.

ACCESS

Most inland waters in England and Wales are privately owned and permission must be gained from the owner before carrying out any water activities. There are some places where permission is not required:- the sea, most stretches of tidal water and some public and common law navigations. There are also waters where licences are readily available. This paper attempts to give details of these waters and the licensing authorities.

IDENTIFICATION OF CRAFT

The rules of The Scout Association relating to the identification of Scout owned and operated craft are contained in the Policy, Organisation and Rules, Chapter Ten Rule 42.3. On certain waters in order to qualify for nationally agreed access the purple boat identification plate available from the Information Centre at Gilwell Park must be displayed.

LICENSING AUTHORITIES

British Waterways Board

In 1971, as a result of the British Waterways Act the British Waterways Board were given control, and empowered to charge fees for canals and certain rivers and waterways.

a) Concessions on certain waterways

At the time of the Act, The Scout Association negotiated special concessions for its Members in view of previous usage of certain waterways. Headquarters therefore pay to the Board a compounded fee every three years, thus saving individual units registering their own boats and canoes.

The concession applies to all "Scout" craft identified by the purple identification badge on the following waterways:-

- The River Avon, from the tail of Hanham Lock to the tail of the bottom lock at Bath.
- The Fossdyke Navigation.
- The River Lea Navigation from Hertford to the River Thames at Limehouse and the tail of the Bow Locks.
- The River Severn from S to its junction with the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal at Gloucester.
- The River Soar Navigation from its junction with the River Trent to Leicester.
- The River Stort Navigation.
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- The Trent Navigation from Shardlow to Gainsborough Bridge.
- The River Ure Navigation from Ripon to Swale Nab.
- The Weaver Navigation from Winsford Bridge to its junction with the Manchester Ship Canal at Marsh Lock and at Delamere Lock.
- The Witham Navigation from Lincoln to Boston.
- The Yorkshire Ouse Navigation.

b) Other British Waterways controlled water

The remaining waters controlled by the British Waterways Board, i.e. the majority of En(Welsh Canals require a separate licence. This can be obtained in a number of ways. For powered craft, dinghies, rowing boats and canoes, long or short term licences are available directly from the British Waterways Board, Craft Licensing Officer, Willow Grange, Church Road, Watford, Herts WD1 3QA.

In addition Members of the Movement may apply for Canoe licences from the British Canoe Union, John Dudderidge House, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Notts NG2 5AS.

Those groups which do a considerable amount of canoeing on British Waterways Board Canals should consider Youth Affiliation to the British Canoe Union which can bring more savings and support. The British Canoe Union Canal Licence covers the canals administered by the British Waterways Board, the lower parts of the River Trent and Severn, the Basingstoke Canal, the Rochdale Canal, part of the upper Avon (Evesham to Alveston), the lower Avon Trust Waters, the Wey and Godalming Navigation, the River Medway and the National Rivers Authority Anglian Rivers (Ancholme, part of the Cam, Glen, Great Ouse below Bedford plus other tributaries, Nene, Suffolk Stour and Welland).

River Thames

All craft using water above Teddington must be registered or exempted by the Thames Region, National Rivers Authority.

Scout Groups should apply to the National Rivers Authority for exemption of craft which are owned by the Group and are used solely for training purposes. Craft which are privately owned by individuals are not eligible for exemption and they must be registered at the full statutory rate.

Details are available from:-

National Rivers Authority, Thames Region, Kings Meadow House, Kings Meadow Road, Reading, Berkshire RG 1 8DG.

Wey and Godalming Navigations

Licences are available from National Trust Navigation Manager, Dapdune Lea, Wharf Road, Guildford, GUI 4RR.

River Medway, Navigation, and the Royal Military Canal

Licences are issued by the National Rivers Authority, Southern Region, Gilborne House, Worthing, West Sussex BN1 1LD. Scout Association Craft with the purple registration plate and a registration number identifiable by the Kent Scout Water Authorities are exempt from further charges.

Stratford Avon below Evesham

There is a public right of passage from Evesham to the Severn at Tewkesbury (subject to charges), applied to the Lower Avon Navigation Trust, The Holloway, Pershore, Worcestershire.

River Severn

There is a public right of passage from Welshpool to Gloucester.

Scout Association identified craft are covered by the British Waterways Board Act 1971 concession.

River Wye

This is a statutory navigation. The exact status of the River above Hey is disputed and local advice should be taken.

Bridgewater Canal

Licences available from the Manchester Ship Canal Company, Trafford Road, Manchester 5.

Craft in possession of a British Waterways Board licence are covered under a reciprocal arrangement.

River Trent

Scout Association identified craft are covered by British Waterways Board Act 1971 concession downstream of Derwent mouth at Shardlow.

Anglian Rivers

For the Bedford Ouse below Kempston, Ancholme, Nene, Welland, Glen, Little Ouse and Cam up to the first lock a permit is required from the National Rivers Authority, Anglian Region, Aqua House, London Road, Peterborough PE2 8AG.

Norfolk Broads and Rivers

Licences from-n the Yare, Bure and Waveney Commissioners, 24 South Quay, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk.

All Other Waters

It should not be assumed that because a waterway does not come under any of the above authorities then no permission is required. Only local sources and enquiries will enable you to ascertain if permission can be granted, whether a licence is required and if any charge is made. Enquiries should be made through the County Water Activities Adviser of the area you wish to visit. Water Activities Advisers can normally be contacted through the County Secretary.

PUBLICATION CROSS REFERENCE

Current edition of:-

Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association