


Boat Licensing Team, National Waterways Museum Ellesmere Port, South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 4FW  
**T 0303 040 4040** Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm, weekends & Bank Holidays 9am to 5pm. Calls charged at local rate.  
**E [customer.services@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:customer.services@canalrivertrust.org.uk)**  
**[canalrivertrust.org.uk/licensing](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/licensing)**  
**f [/canalrivertrustboating](https://www.facebook.com/canalrivertrustboating)**



Please also see: [Application form for a short term licence](#) • [Boat condition declaration for a short term licence](#)

## Choosing a licence

### Thirty day explorer

This gives you up to thirty days use of all our waterways in England and Wales at any time within twelve months of issue date – the days do not need to be consecutive. We provide you with thirty, one-day tickets, which you date and display for each day that your boat is on our waters.

### One month and one week licences

#### Canal and river licence

Allows you to keep and use a boat on any of our waterways in England and Wales.

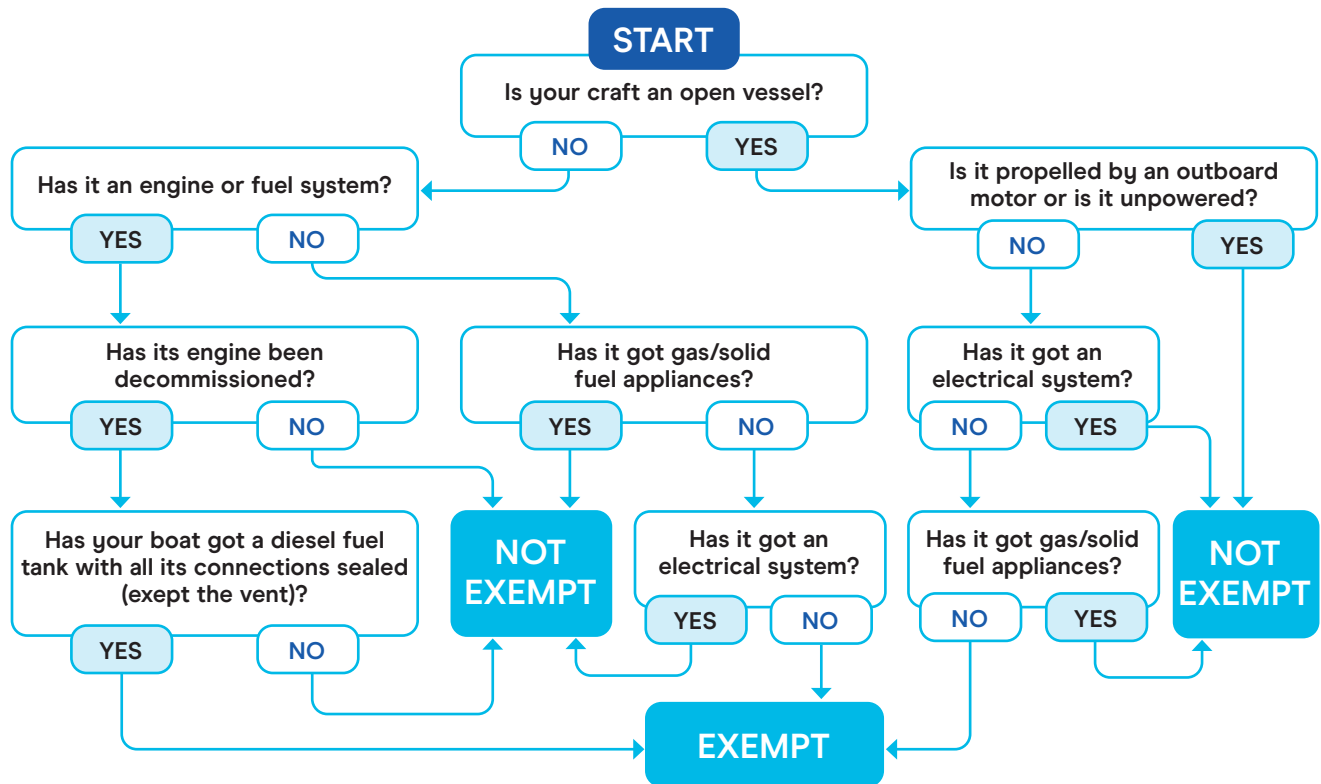
#### Rivers only licence

- Avon (Hanham Lock to Bath)
- Bow Back Rivers
- Fosdyke & Witham (Torksey to Boston)
- Lee Navigation (Hertford to Limehouse)
- Limehouse Cut
- Ouse and Ure (Goole to Ripon)
- Severn (Stourport to Gloucester)
- Soar Navigation (Trent Junction to Leicester)
- Stort Navigation
- Tees (Tees Barrage to Low Worsal)
- Trent (Shardlow-Gainsborough, including the Nottingham & Beeston Canal)
- Weaver Navigation (Winsford Bridge to Manchester Ship Canal)

**One day and explorer licences are not available for craft floating in marinas or moorings connected to Canal & River Trust waters.**  
 Short term licences do not include free passage through the Anderton Boat Lift, Standedge Tunnel or Ribble Link.

## Boat safety

Your boat should comply with our safety requirements at all times unless it is a very simple vessel. Check to see whether it is exempt by tracing through the questions on the chart below.



We have the right to refuse access onto our waterways for any boat that we think may present a safety risk to other waterway users. In purchasing a short term licence you agree to allow our employees or an appointed surveyor to carry out a safety check at any reasonable time. If we believe your boat is dangerous, you will have to remove it from the waterway.

#### To qualify for a licence your boat must have one of the following:

- a current certificate to show compliance with our Boat Safety Scheme requirements
- a current Declaration of Conformity with the EU's Recreational Craft Directive
- We will issue a short term licence without either if you are able to satisfy the conditions contained within the **Boat Condition Declaration** – please complete separate Application Form.

## Insurance

Your Boat must have insurance that covers at least third party liabilities up to two million pounds.

## Discounts

If you have a current three, six or twelve month Canal & River Trust River Only Licence, you are entitled to a 50% discount on a Short Term Canal Licence, which is valid for the same period. Discounts for clubs licensing more than ten unpowered craft are subject to the local Canal & River Trust manager's discretion.

## Where to buy your licence

- From a canalside Canal & River Trust licensing agent (a list is available from the Customer Service Centre or [canalrivertrust.org.uk/licensing](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/licensing)).
- By telephone from the Customer Service Centre **0303 040 4040**.
- Online at [canalrivertrust.org.uk/short-term](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/short-term) with a valid debit or credit card.

## Personal safety

The Waterways that you use can be dangerous places. The safety of our users and people is very important to us and we do our best to make the system as safe as possible. Due to their historic character, it is impossible for us to adapt them to make them completely safe without ruining what we seek to conserve.

As a result, there are inherent risks for those that use them. Please ensure that there is always sufficient competent crew to minimise risks to your own and other people's safety. Ask for a free copy of our Boaters' Handbook and check for local information about the Waterways you plan to use.

## Waterway facilities

We provide a range of basic services for boaters, including water points, refuse disposal, toilets and Elsan emptying points throughout the waterway network. These are generally free to licence holders. Access to sanitary facilities is by a special Yale key, available from the Customer Service Centre. Where showers, laundry facilities or electric charging points are available, payment is by digital card. On some waterways you need an antivandal key to operate structures. For more information go to [canalrivertrust.org.uk/shop](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/shop)

## Navigation rules

- 1) The Boat Licence does not give you any priority of passage on any Waterway. You must follow the directions of our local people who may decide which boats have priority.
- 2) You are responsible for assessing whether it is safe to use the Waterway in flood or strong stream conditions. Our Waterway offices will provide information.
- 3) You must share locks up to their capacity. There is no right to the exclusive use of a lock.
- 4) Whilst your boat is on any Canal & River Trust waterway, you must not:
  - (a) do anything which will cause damage or nuisance to any other person or their property.
  - (b) use any electricity generator, including the Boat's engine, at any mooring along the waterway between 8pm and 8am, unless you are moored in isolation, out of earshot of other people. We do not intend this Condition to stop you moving the Boat from the mooring.
  - (c) run the Boat's engine in gear when it is moored as this can damage the waterway walls and cause a nuisance to other people.

- (d) discharge anything into the Waterway from the Boat except unpolluted surface water that drains naturally or water from sinks or showers on board the Boat.
  - (e) obstruct the towpath or use our land for storing items from your Boat.
  - (f) take a vehicle on to our towpaths or land or park on them unless we have already given our permission
- (g) Exceed the speed limit. Regardless of speed, if the boat is making waves or the wash is hitting the bank, you should slow down. The speed limit is four miles per hour on almost all waterways. There are variations, particularly for rivers, which are locally signed.
- 5) There is no general restriction on the use of locks by portable and unpowered boats. However, in the interest of safety and to conserve water, specific local restrictions may apply. We encourage users to carry portable boats around locks if possible. If it is not possible, we recommend using ropes to pass the Boat through the lock. It is preferable that there is nobody on board the Boat while it is in the lock. Local Canal & River Trust instructions must always be followed.
  - 6) Unpowered boats may not navigate certain tunnels. Please check locally for advice or ask us for the national list of tunnels. Where you are permitted to navigate, we encourage the following precautions:
    - (a) navigate in groups of between three and six craft, at least one of which must be navigated by an experienced person.
    - (b) everyone should be able to swim, should wear a life jacket, and have a waterproof torch and whistle attached to them.
    - (c) the boats must have adequate buoyancy.
    - (d) you must display a securely fixed, bright white light showing forward.
  - 7) You must not crane a Boat into or out of any Waterway without our written permission, other than at a boatyard with appropriate facilities. This is to ensure compliance with the relevant lifting regulations and to ensure the safety of other waterway users.

## Summary of licence conditions

- 1) You must ensure that when the Boat is under way, there is always an adequate and competent crew in attendance. A copy of our Boaters' Handbook should be kept on board the Boat and drawn to the attention of all crew members and passengers.
- 2) You must display the licence so that it is easily visible by our people on the bank or at locks.
- 3) The licence is not refundable and not transferable between craft.
- 4) The licence does not permit use of the Boat for carrying goods, or as a tug or other workboat or for any business purpose without our permission.
- 5) The licence does not allow you to moor except for short periods ancillary to cruising. You must have somewhere to keep the Boat when it is not being used for cruising.
- 6) You agree to comply with navigation rules, relevant Acts, Byelaws and regulations, and to follow any of our lawful directions, spoken or written (including signs).
- 7) You agree to be responsible for any damage or difficulty caused by you or the Boat because of anything you have carelessly done or not done.
- 8) Once the licence has ended, unless you re-license the Boat you must remove it from our waters. If you do not, we have powers to remove it ourselves and to charge you for the costs we incur in doing this.
- 9) Waterways are occasionally closed for repairs or due to emergencies. We will not rebate licence fees in respect of such closures.
- 10) The licence does not allow you to tow the Boat by animal or vehicle. You need our written permission to do this.

For a full set of General Licence Conditions, go to [canalrivertrust.org.uk/licensing](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/licensing) or contact the customer service centre.

Sign up to a monthly newsletter at [canalrivertrust.org.uk/my-trust/register](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/my-trust/register)  
to receive updates and the latest news from the Canal & River Trust via email.