



**Canal &  
River Trust**

Making life better by water

# Boater Report 2020

**Caring for our waterways  
– how the Trust applies its  
finances to benefit boaters**



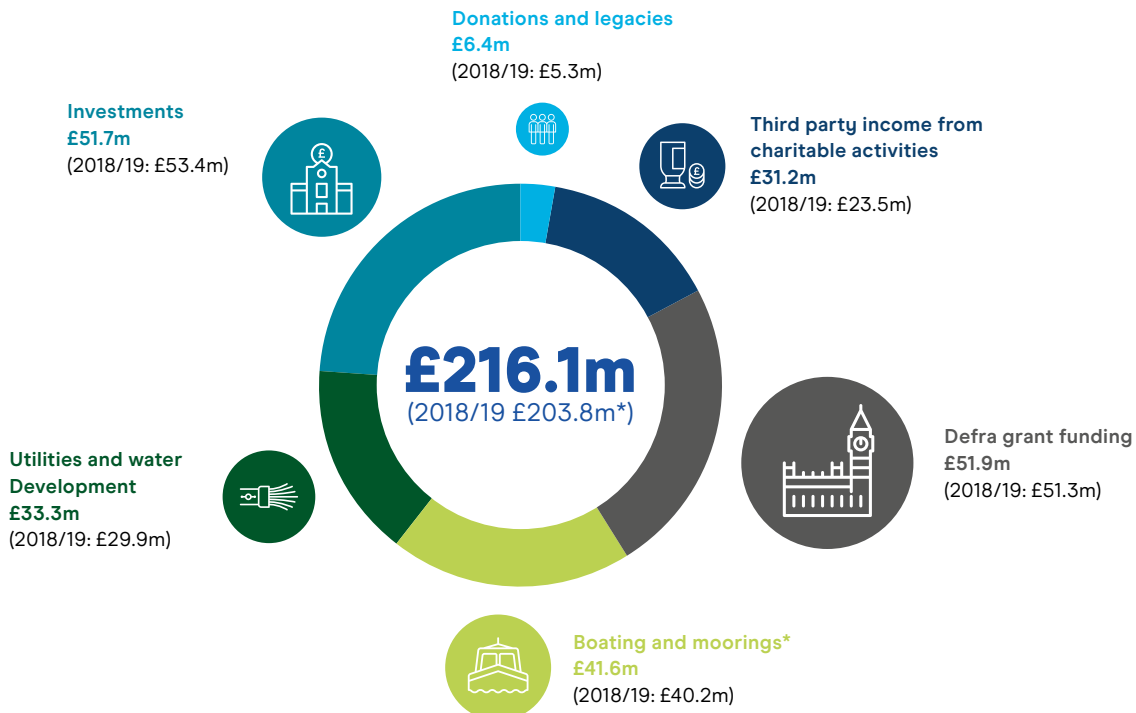
With over 2,000 miles of canals and rivers throughout England and Wales, our charity aims to maintain these for the millions of people who share and enjoy the space, adding to their wellbeing, their mental and physical health. Boaters have benefitted for years from the difference that being by water has on their health, and one of our core purposes is to keep the waterways open for around 33,000 boaters.

Our income is derived from a variety of sources; around a quarter comes from the grant we receive from the government and a quarter from our own investments. We also receive income from lottery funds, corporate and local authority partnerships and donations from the public. Volunteers are a life line – they gave us 704,532 hours of their time last year. We are so grateful to them.

Boating activities make an important contribution to our income, but only cover part of the cost of maintaining and operating the waterways. Moorings and boating businesses are a key factor, adding £20m, whilst leisure boat licences add a further £21.6m. This is vital for our finances.



## Income for the last financial year

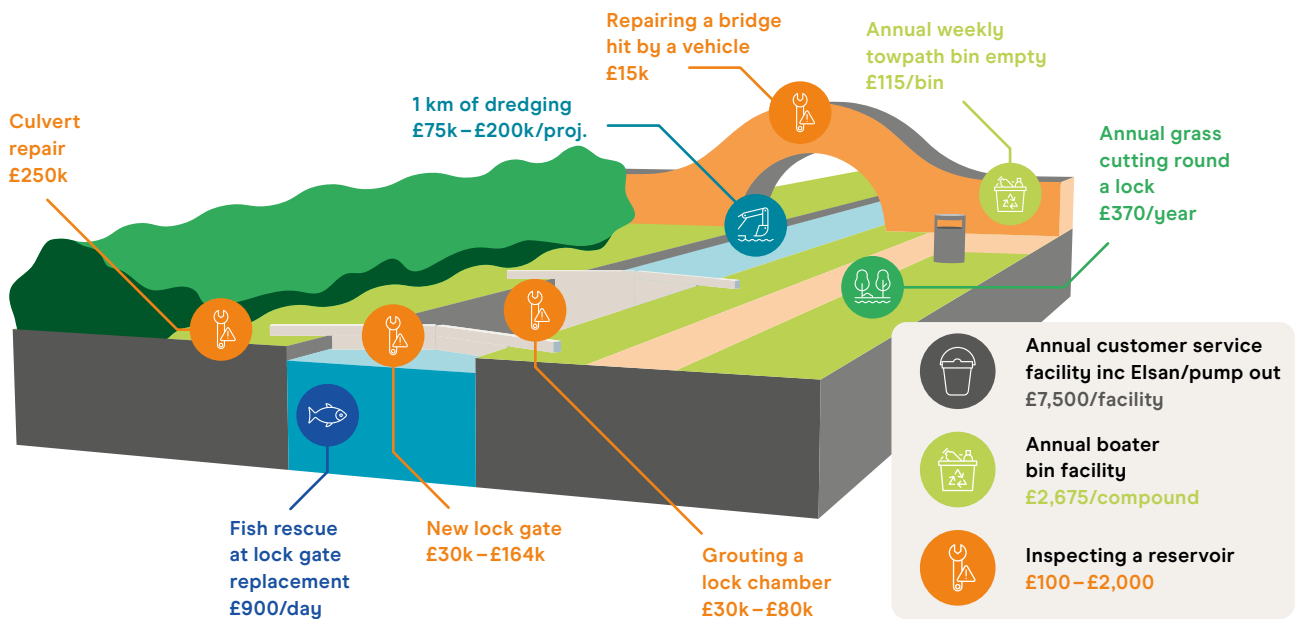


\* excluding £6.2m income in 2018/19 from BWML

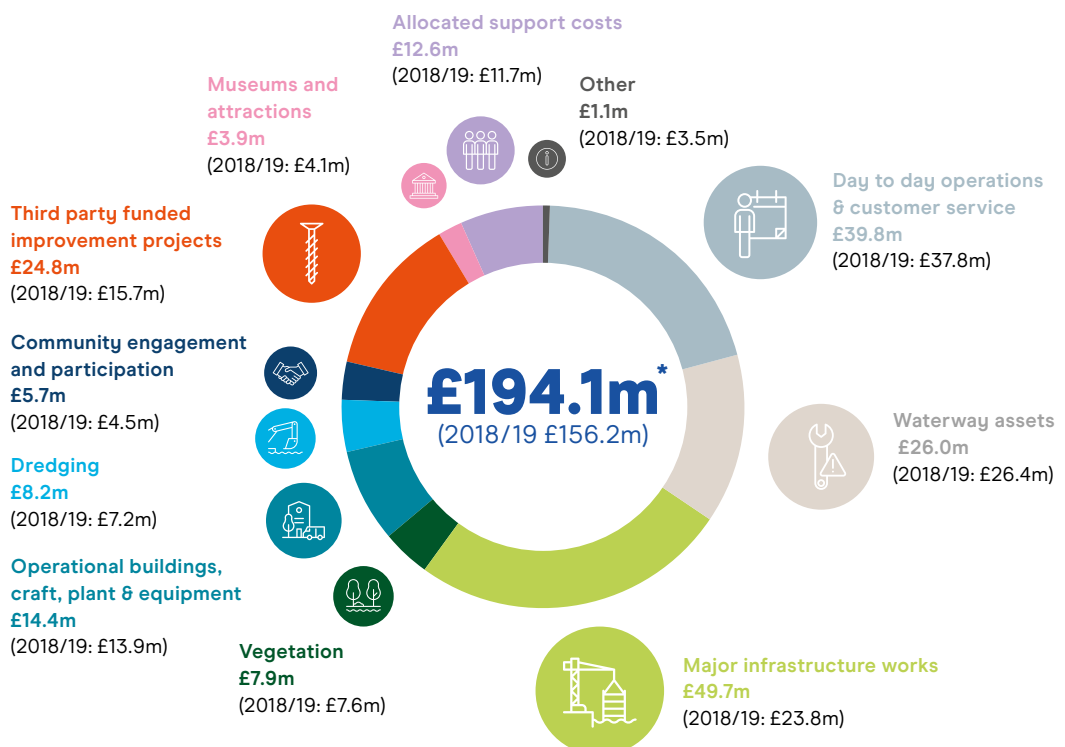
## Where does the money go?

Our total expenditure for 2019/20 was £194.1m. Most of this was spent on maintenance or the day to day running of the Trust. We completed 80 major works projects and undertook 547 planned repairs. We replaced 122 lock gates and spent £8.2m on dredging.

Our day to day costs include IT, staff recruitment and development. We have included profiles of some of the people who keep our waterways open. We also spent money on works which were funded partially by partners outside the Trust, especially towpath resurfacing.



## Expenditure on charitable activities



\* excludes £38.7m expenditure on raising funds. Trust deficit for the year overall £16.7m

## Some of the roles – and the people – who keep the waterways available for you to enjoy



**Charlotte Wood – Head of Operations (London and South East)**

I lead the operational teams in London & the South East, preparing and delivering a plan of works to ensure the region's waterways are safe and inspiring places, and facilitating the delivery of the regional strategy. One of these projects is working closely with the boating & customer service manager to deliver the London Mooring Strategy and to roll out the learning across the wider region.

Day to day, my teams are the face of the Trust, out on the waterways undertaking multiple tasks and activities. These include water control, preventative maintenance, responding to customers, volunteer events, towpath taskforce, reservoir inspections, contract management, fly tipping removal, reactive repairs, the list goes on!

It's exciting and rewarding to be part of the transformation of the region, sharing and releasing the potential of our waterways for the communities that they serve, and engaging with the public in our work. Every day provides fresh, new challenges counterbalanced with much reward and pride.

**Charlotte is the only head of operations in the country; there are also 5 regional operations managers. Read more about Charlotte's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)**



**Nathan Arries – Licensing Ranger (North West and West Midlands)**

Primarily my role involves walking canal and river lengths all year, logging boat data onto my iPad. This information produces a history of boat movements and also identifies unlicensed and unmarked boats. We're often the first point of contact, not just for boaters, but anglers, walkers – all towpath users, in fact.

I cover an average 10 miles a day, which means the whole patch is covered within the 14-day period. There are so many beautiful locations to walk through, experiencing wildlife and ancient structures, especially on the Montgomery and Llangollen canals, but walking in the rain and snow can be pretty miserable.

**Nathan is one of 25 Licensing Rangers within the Trust.  
Read more about Nathan's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)**



**Liam Cooper – Boating and Customer Service Manager (North West)**

I manage the Customer Support Teams and the Boat Licence Customer Support Team in the North West region, responsible for all customer related regional contacts, enquiries and complaints. As an experienced boater and coming from a consumer-focused background, I am passionate about delivering the best possible service to our customers every time that they contact us.

The best, and often the most challenging aspect of the role is that no two days are the same – you never know what the next new problem is going to be. Job satisfaction comes each day from knowing that customer expectations have been met and, preferably, exceeded.

**Liam is one of 6 Boating and Customer Service Managers within the Trust.  
Read more about Liam's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)**



#### Georgina Wood – Business Boating Manager (South, West & Central)

My team acts as the primary contact for anyone operating, or interested in running a business on our waters, providing advice and information to enable people to make informed decisions.

A boat used for any purpose other than your own private leisure use will fall into one of the business licence categories. Business boating customers include hire and passenger boat operators, moorings and marina businesses, static businesses based on boats and roving traders.

We are responsible for effectively managing, promoting and developing business opportunities that contribute to the Trust's aims to increase the number of people using the waterways, whilst protecting the integrity of the network.

**Georgina is one of 4 Business Boating Managers within the Trust.**  
Read more about Georgina's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)



#### Richard Bennett – Heritage & Environmental Managers (East Midlands)

Canals and navigable rivers were feats of innovation 200 years ago when they were made – and keeping them that way involves negotiating many legal and statutory considerations that weren't around then. My team of specialists in ecology, environmental science and heritage help find a way through this minefield in a way that enables us to keep the network safe, accessible and enjoyable.

We help set the standards for maintaining grass, trees and hedges, whilst making sure that we retain and enhance the species and habitats that they support. We try to keep on top of the increasing spread of invasive plants and animals which in some cases are a hazard to health or can lead to waterways being blocked by excessive growth. We help to plan and carry out dredging in the most effective way, so we can keep waterways open for boaters.

**Richard is one of 6 Heritage & Environmental Managers within the Trust.**  
Read more about Richard's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)



#### Phil Hancock – Asset Inspector (East Midlands)

My role is to monitor the waterways for changes. I'm watching those faults that we are already aware of, to see whether there has been any change, and also looking out for new faults. I also check on work that has been carried out, to ensure that any problems have been rectified.

On a typical day I might walk up to 15km, but it takes longer to inspect those areas with many locks. No two days are the same; there are slips, cracks, missing signs, vegetation; any number of issues might crop up.

The role has changed over the years, from being pen and paper based to using the latest technology. Knowledge of the different types of locks, and what they look like empty, where culverts go, the way a certain structure changes in heat or in the depths of winter, and so on, count equally as much as hypothetical learning.

**Phil is one of 27 Asset Inspectors within the Trust.**  
Read more about Phil's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)

**Kathryn Smith – Principal Hydrologist (National)**

I work in the Water Management team, providing hydrological support in numerous areas, many of which are related to boating. I am involved in a wide range of projects which cross over water resources and flood risk management. The most high-profile project I have supported is the Toddbrook incident, and I've been working hard to maximise water supply in the area to help boaters continue to enjoy the Peak Forest canal.

My team also takes a balanced view and assesses each new marina proposal based on water availability while we support new developments. These need to be located in places where they won't cause water supply problems for existing canal boaters.

**Kathryn is one of 3 Principal Hydrologists within the Trust.**

**Read more about Katherine's work: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)**

**Peter Foale – Volunteer Lock Keeper (East Midlands)**

As a volunteer lock keeper, the core part of a day at a lock is spent working with staff to help boaters as they make their way up and down the river, easing their passage safely through the very large locks that are on the Trent.

Boaters and their boats come in all shapes and sizes with huge differences in their level of experience and ability to handle their boats. The mood of the river can change from day to day so keeping in touch with fellow lock keepers up and down the river and giving boaters the level of support they need to be safe on the water is as important as actually operating the locks for them.

**Peter is one of 3,600 Volunteers who give their time to work for the Trust.**

**Read more about Peter's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)**

**Liz Sollars – Licence Support Officer (West Midlands)**

My role involves making certain that all craft are licensed and helping make sure that continuous cruisers understand and adhere to the guidelines for boats without a home mooring.

My team is often the first point of contact for many boaters or members of the public and we answer a diverse range of queries. We are increasingly seeing many vulnerable boaters suffering ill health or financial hardship. Once I have identified boaters with such needs, I work with them to see what support they might need. After eighteen years in this role I still enjoy the challenges that the position brings.

**Liz is one of 25 Licence Support Officers within the Trust.**

**Read more about Liz's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)**



**Sean Williams – Welfare Officer (National)**

My focus is on offering advice, guidance and signposting for any person who has a concern about the welfare of boaters on our waterways. The awareness of safeguarding, boater welfare and surrounding policies have become increasingly paramount for all within the Trust. We collaborate with specialist support agencies that have a specific focus on boaters, which helps us in promoting boaters' wellbeing.

I work with my boating colleagues when assessing the need for equality adjustments so people with protected characteristics can be empowered to continue enjoying our canals.

**Sean is the Trust's lead for boater welfare but supports all staff working with boaters across the Trust. Read more about Sean's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)**



**Adnan Saif – Regional Director (West Midlands)**

I oversee two teams, responsible for different areas but reliant on each other - an operational team, which looks after the waterways, keeping them safe, attractive and welcoming, and a wellbeing and engagement team, who rise to the challenge of capturing the attention and awareness of the local communities, to encourage more use of the green and blue space. We need to change perception from the traditional notion of the canal hidden at the back of an industrial area to today's reality of the canal as an important accessible green/blue space.

The character of the canals over the past 50 years or so would not have been possible without the boaters who have made it what it is. Many of these also volunteer with us. We have around 860 volunteers in many roles, keeping the canals clean, helping maintenance, and in some cases, bringing old derelict canals back into use.

**Adnan is one of 6 Regional Managers within the Trust.  
Read more about Adnan's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)**



**Dean Davies – Head of Direct Services (National)**

My team makes sure the Trust's structures are in good working order by fixing faults and problems, of which there are a number, as you can imagine on a system that is over 200 years old.

The 300-person department I lead carries out most of the heritage repairs and all the lock gate replacements around the network. Each year we replace between 120 and 160 lock gate leaves between November and March – so the quietest time as far as canal usage is concerned is our busiest time of the year.

The sense of achievement and satisfaction in keeping our historic waterway network working gives me a great deal of pleasure.

**Read more about Dean's role: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boaterreports)**

## Major works, minor works & everyday repairs



**96.2%**

licence  
compliance



**£49.7m**

spent on major  
infrastructure  
works



**£31.2m**

third party  
funding



**80**

major works  
projects  
completed



**547**

planned repairs



**93**

unexpected  
repairs



**77km**

dredged



**122**

lock gates  
replaced



**164,000**

hours of volunteer  
lock keeping



**14,358**

miles of grass cut



**86.97%**

of assets  
graded A-C



**43,000**

litter/dog bins  
emptied

## Canal & River Trust

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All information correct at the time of printing.