

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Update for waterway users - 19 July 2021

The Prime Minister has confirmed that England will move fully out of lockdown on 19 July. From that date all the legal restrictions on socialising will end and people will be allowed to make their own decisions about how best to protect their own and others' health, based on the latest government and scientific advice.

The government has stressed however that the virus remains a serious threat and that people must continue to act with caution. The government will be providing further specific guidance, which is still being finalised. You can find the latest government guidance [here](#).

What this means for our waterways

We are working through what all this will mean for our own operations. While the circumstances, the government's policy, and some of the advice is changing, our priorities won't: we will continue to focus on protecting everyone's health, safety and wellbeing and meeting our operational needs.

We will put any new arrangements in place as quickly as we can, but it will take time for us to fully review the guidance and make the appropriate adjustments to our working arrangements in offices and out on the waterways. In the meantime we will carry on using the existing safe systems of work that we have implemented over the past 16 months until we can adjust them in line with new government guidance.

All boating activity on our waterways should continue to follow government guidance carefully and you should check GOV.UK to ensure that you are keeping yourselves and others safe.

Our service at this time

Throughout the pandemic our focus has been on keeping the public and our staff safe. That will not change after 19 July. As we implement new arrangements we will continue to prioritise everyone's health, safety and wellbeing.

Therefore, from the 19 July we are not expecting much to change at our sites. Risk measures and signage will stay in place to remind customers of the importance of safe distancing, particularly whilst case numbers are still on the increase.

Throughout the pandemic additional control measures have allowed our staff and customers to carry out their activities whilst minimising direct contact. We are expecting to keep these control measures at our sites for the foreseeable future.

As many of you who have been enjoying our waterways will know, these control measures have enabled our sites to remain operational and for us to support safe access to our navigations.

As restrictions are eased, we are anticipating being able to start opening many of our campsites again along the Thames and details of this will be available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-thames-locks-and-facilities-for-boaters>.

We also anticipate being able to welcome back volunteers to many of our sites as soon as we are able to do so.

To keep up to date with local information, see the following websites:

River Thames: <http://riverconditions.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

customer service line **03708 506 506**

floodline **03459 88 11 88**

incident hotline **0800 80 70 60**

Page 1 of 2

Anglian Waterways: <https://www.visitanglianwaterways.org/>

River Medway: <http://allingtonlock.co.uk/home.php>

Boat registration

As our Boat Registration team and National Customer Contact Centre continue working remotely, you will continue to receive registration certificates and plates by email.

The team can be contacted Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm by email boatreg@environment-agency.gov.uk or telephone 03708 506 506.

We still recommend that you do not send postal applications at the moment; due to continuing constraints on office access these are taking longer to process.

Our ways of working and access to offices will be reviewed across all of our organisation in light of the latest government guidance, but it will be some time before all restrictions are removed.

Boat Safety Scheme

For the latest guidance on Boat Safety Scheme certificates, please see the Boat Safety Scheme [website](#).

We will update our guidance if government advice changes significantly, so please do keep checking the guidance [via this link](#) for the latest information.

Andy Wilkinson

National Navigation Manager