

## **Community Patrol Boat**

### **Draft Terms of Reference**

The Community Patrol Boat operates on the Grand Western Canal to promote public safety, encourage considerate use, assist with applying permit requirements / conditions for certain activities and to provide public assistance and canal information if required.

The Community Patrol Boat (Ripple) is owned by Tiverton Canal Co and is made available to Devon County Council through an agreement with Tiverton Town Council. The Agreement includes mooring at Canal Basin, annual maintenance to the outboard motor, lifting and winter storage at Tiverton Canal Co Boat Yard.



These terms of reference outline the scope and remit of the Community Patrol Boat, as well as safety and reporting procedures.

### **Authority to operate**

1. The Community Patrol Boat operates on behalf of the Canal owner - Devon County Council - and crew operating the boat are considered to be volunteers for the Grand Western Canal Country Park Ranger Service and are therefore covered by Devon County Council's public liability and employer's liability insurance.
2. Devon County Council's representative for operational matters at the Grand Western Canal is the Canal Manager. The Community Patrol Boat will operate under these terms of reference as interpreted by the Canal Manager, and through discussion with him on any issues that arise.
3. Devon County Council may choose to alter or amend these terms of reference at any time but will take into account the views of the Canal's Joint Advisory Committee and any major funders of the Community Patrol Boat.
4. It is agreed by all parties that the Community Patrol Boat will also operate within the terms of agreement set out between Tiverton Canal Co and Tiverton Town Council. It is also agreed that should the Tiverton Town Council or Tiverton Canal Co decide for any reason not to continue this agreement The Community Patrol Boat would cease to operate and the boat (Ripple) returned to Tiverton Canal Co with immediate effect.

### **Extent of operation**

5. The Community Patrol Boat is permitted to operate along the entire 11.25 miles of Canal between Tiverton and Lowdells, during day or night.
6. The home mooring for the Community Patrol Boat is in the Canal Basin and so it is inevitable that more time will be spent patrolling the section of Canal between Tiverton and Halberton. Given the voluntary commitment being provided by the crew, it is unreasonable to insist on specific amounts of time to be spent patrolling further along the Canal towards Sampford Peverell and Burlescombe. However, it is understood that reasonable efforts will be made to patrol these sections several times a year, providing a safe and secure mooring and be found on the offside of the canal for the patrol boat, if it needs to be moored away from the Canal Basin overnight.

## **Funding**

7. Devon County Council accepts no obligation for funding the Community Patrol Boat and if a lack of funding at any time means that the boat cannot be operated safely then its operation will have to cease.
8. At the time of writing, the largest single funder of the Community Patrol Boat is Tiverton Town Council. The Community Patrol Boat accounts are and will continue to be managed by Tiverton Town Council. If this arrangement ceases, then these terms of reference will be reviewed.
9. The Community Patrol Boat 'team' – comprising the crew and any supporters – are responsible for securing the necessary funding and for negotiating and adhering to the terms of the funding provided, ensuring that any funding conditions comply with these terms of reference.

### **Remit** - Core activities for the Community Patrol Boat are as follows:

10. Promoting public safety: With reference to the Canal and Towpath Codes of Conduct, and the Canal Byelaws, to encourage safe and considerate use of the Country Park by all visitors. This will entail stopping and talking to visitors as appropriate, always explaining the reasons for the safe and considerate behaviour that is requested. Key issues to address include cycling under bridges where this is prohibited, littering, dog fouling and dogs out of control (e.g. attacking other dogs / people / wildlife / farm animals).
11. Where possible, assisting the emergency services or Canal Ranger Service during incidents (e.g. missing persons).
12. Encouraging compliance with boat permit requirements: Community Patrol Boat crew are authorised to request evidence that boaters have a valid boat licence. If boaters do not have a valid licence, they shall be advised of the requirement to have one and be provided with details of the current boat permit outlets. If feasible, boaters should be encouraged to buy one on that day retrospectively, or if not then to ensure they have one before visiting the canal again.

Any boater who is clearly speeding (exceeding 4mph – brisk walking pace) may be hailed and requested to slow down. Failure to comply should be immediately reported to the Canal Ranger Service who may seek to intercept and evict the boat in question.

13. Encouraging compliance with angling permit requirements: The Tiverton and District Angling Club (which leases the fishing rights on the Canal) have authorised the Community Patrol Boat crew to request evidence that anglers have a valid angling permit. If they do not have a valid permit, they shall be advised of the requirement to have one and be provided with details of the current angling permit outlets. If feasible, the angler should be encouraged to buy one on that day retrospectively, or if not then to ensure they have one before visiting the canal again.

The angling club are particularly concerned about fish thefts and are keen for the Community Patrol Boat crew to watch out for potential fish thieves and for unattended lines left out overnight to catch fish. The Community Patrol Boat crew may also choose to join forces with angling club bailiffs and / or the local Environment Agency fisheries officer to undertake night patrols.

14. Providing accurate information about the canal, usually with reference to the Canal Visitor Guide, of which a stock of copies will be kept on board the boat for distribution as required.
15. It is understood that the Canal Manager and the Tiverton and District Angling Club are responsible for informing the Community Patrol Boat crew of any changes which may affect the advice the crew give to members of the public.

## **Health and safety**

16. A skipper's Boat Safety checklist, which includes checks to the outboard motor and the boat must be completed before the boat is used on each occasion.
17. Three risk assessments will be carried out: one for both daytime and night-time operation of the Community Patrol Boat and a fire risk assessment which must be agreed with the Canal Manager and adhered to at all times and be reviewed annually.
18. The skipper of the Community Patrol Boat must be adequately trained in the safe use of the boat and outboard-engine and deemed to be competent by the Canal Manager and the Managing Director of the Tiverton Canal Co. The skipper must hold the RYA Powerboat Level 2 certificate.
19. The Patrol Boat and its operation must at all times abide by the Boaters code of conduct and Navigational Rules and Regulations specific to the Grand Western Canal.
20. For the reasons of safety, The Community Patrol Boat may only operate with a Skipper on board at all times.
21. The Patrol Boat must not exceed 4 persons. (including the Skipper)
22. All crew must be good swimmers (e.g. be able to swim unaided 2 widths of the canal basin minimum) and complete an induction which covers the safe operation of the boat and how to deal with foreseeable emergencies such as man overboard.
23. All crew must wear in date lifejackets and carry a mobile phone at all times when onboard the boat and appropriate lifesaving equipment such as a throwline or life buoy / ring must be carried onboard.
24. The Community Patrol Boat must never carry members of the public or passengers. (other than the designated Skipper, Crew and those authorised by these terms of reference or members of the Canal Ranger Service and emergency services). The community patrol boat is not be used for leisure purposes. **[Note for JAC – there is an outstanding issue regarding the carriage of injured persons. The Canal Manager needs to check if DCC insurance will cover this and the nature of what injuries 'qualify' needs to be defined]**
25. At least one member of the crew must hold a valid first aid certificate and the boat must carry a first aid kit. If a defibrillator is added to the boat's range of equipment at any stage, then it must be professionally serviced annually, and batteries and pads must be in date.
26. If the Community Patrol Boat crew wish to make use of personal CCTV ('bodycams') for their own and / or public safety, then the detail of this must be agreed with the Canal Manager and all regulations and best practice relating to their use must be adhered to.

## **Interaction with the public**

27. The Community Patrol Boat crew are expected to contribute to the warm welcome which Devon County Council wishes to extend to Country Park visitors. Initial interactions should always be friendly and the reasoning behind the rules and codes of conduct should be explained.
28. Conflict with unreasonable or aggressive visitors should be avoided and reported to the Canal Manager or the police depending on the circumstances. Ideally, Community Patrol Boat crew

members should be trained in dealing with conflict and a calm and professional manner should be maintained at all times.

29. Community Patrol Boat crew shall wear a uniform which identifies them and their role and this should be distinct from the Canal Ranger Service (in terms of design of uniform and explanation of their role to the public).
30. Community Patrol Boat crew are encouraged to undertake Community Safety Accreditation Scheme training provided by Devon and Cornwall Police, in order to support them in their role.
31. Community Patrol Boat crew are encouraged to promote their work through social media but should endeavour to balance the 'negative' reports of inconsiderate behaviour with reports of 'positive' incidents and sightings.

As volunteers acting on behalf of Devon County Council, Community Patrol Boat crew members are expected to refrain from instigating media coverage in which they adopt points of view at odds with that of current or proposed management of the Canal. Through their seat on the Canal Joint advisory Committee (see below), they are welcome to use that forum to argue for changes in management policy.

### **Reporting**

32. The skipper of the Community Patrol Boat is responsible for ensuring a log is kept of every patrol undertaken, and details of who is on duty (for that Patrol) and all canal incidents recorded. The log must be made available to the Canal Manager on request. Any serious incidents should be reported to the Canal Manager immediately.
33. Any 'repeat offenders' in terms of failing to have a valid boat licence or fishing permit; cycling under bridges where prohibited; or failing to pick up dog waste or keep dogs under control, should be reported to the Canal Manager or Angling Club as appropriate.
34. A brief report on key incidents and issues encountered in the previous six months shall be prepared by the Community Patrol Boat skipper and be submitted to the Canal's Joint Advisory Committee for their reference as part of the agenda pack which is sent out ahead of meetings in March and October each year.
35. A seat is provided on the Joint Advisory Committee for a representative of the Community Patrol Boat, and attendance at these meetings is expected.