

Study – PLA River Works Licences for Residential Use

26 October 2010

An independent study is underway to establish a method for setting PLA River Works Licence fees for residential use. It will look at a method for setting fees, how to phase in any changes, options for dispute resolution and recommend revisions to licence clauses. The study is planned to conclude in Spring 2011 and will be followed by a formal public consultation.



A message from Richard Everitt, Chief Executive, PLA:

Recent representations from resident boaters indicate that many are unhappy with the current system and all parties now wish to address this situation.

Our objectives for the study are to find a transparent, reliable procedure for setting fees which is easily understood by all, with scope for each individual situation to be assessed on its own merits within a consistent framework. It also needs to deliver an equitable return to the PLA for the use of the Thames.

We welcome the role of OPLAC (Organisation of PLA Customers), RBOA (Residential Boat Owners' Association) and the Valuation Office Agency on the steering group. We have stressed that the review should be independent, objective and must consider the perspectives of a range of interested parties, particularly the residential boaters, for whom we recognise this is an important issue. We encourage you to get in touch with OPLAC, RBOA, the independent consultant, or indeed ourselves. Richard.everitt@pla.co.uk



Organisation of PLA Customers

'Organising PLA customers for a fairer deal'

www.oplac.org

A message from David Beaumont, Chair, OPLAC:

OPLAC was formed this year by a group of PLA customers in order to get ourselves a fairer deal and to address the uncertainty about future fee increases. We are actively involved in putting houseboat and River Works licence holders' points of view to the independent consultant. We are a member of the Steering Group for the Study (please read the Terms of Reference which we contributed to). We have also been involved in drawing up the list of issues that the Study is to consider (attached).

We hope that the Study and the public consultation afterwards will result in a clear, fair and lasting method of assessing fees and of reviewing them in future, and that houseboats will not be priced off the tidal Thames.

Please send us any issues you would like to add or any information you would like to be considered for the Study. If necessary mark it as confidential and we will treat it as such. We would also be delighted for you to join OPLAC if you are not already a member, and in either case we would like you to get involved in what we are doing. david@oplac.org

***** TURN OVER FOR DETAILS OF THE CONSULTANT AND THE STUDY*****

Note that any current reviews of River Works Licences, and any that fall due for review during the timeframe of the study, will be held in abeyance until its conclusion (although formal notices will still have to be issued for legal reasons but will refer to the delay).



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We have been appointed as independent consultants for the study, having experience in the residential mooring sector and an understanding of the issues from all perspectives, plus an established and good working relationship with the RBOA. We are committed to ensuring that the views of all groups are represented and understood during this study.

How the study will work

A steering group has been established to direct our work, provide a forum for debate, supply information and consider recommendations. The members are:

- Valuation Office Agency - Richard Whitehill BSc MRICS – chair of the steering group
- PLA – Brian Chapman, John Ball, Doug Kempster
- OPLAC – David Beaumont (chair of OPLAC) Moira Allan, Peter Banks
- Residential Boat Owners' Association – Rex Walden (chairman of RBOA) rex.walden@live.co.uk

The process has recently started - the steering group have agreed the attached Terms of Reference and Issues List.

Information will be posted regularly on the websites of OPLAC and the PLA.

Have your say – by 19 November 2010

We now want to hear from PLA River Works Licensees (for residential moorings), residential boaters and any other interested parties.

Ensure that your own situation is properly represented and considered

There are very diverse arrangements for residential mooring on the Thames from individuals and cooperatives to share-holdings and commercial operators with different licences, access agreements and mooring fees.

It is important that we understand the differences between sites and how people may be affected as we develop options for PLA charges for River Works Licences.

We therefore encourage you to provide us with as much information relating to your site as you are happy to. We will then have the best chance to understand everyone's circumstances.

Get in touch – our details are at the top of this page, and we would welcome a discussion by phone, or

Arrange a meeting with Madge Bailey – please call to book a time on one of the following days:

Tuesday 16th, Wednesday 17th or Thursday 18th November 2010

Take this opportunity to tell us about your situation and your views.