

Compliance and enforcement activities on our waterways

The Environment Agency has experienced a drop in the numbers of boats, and in particular powered vessels, that are usually registered to use our waterways by this time of year.

The Agency has followed government guidance and has been understanding of the situation brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic and the financial implications for many of its customers. It has offered new ways to help boaters spread the cost of registration although the Agency's refund policy remains unchanged, it does not offer refunds for closures or restrictions.

In addition, because of restrictions put in place in response to the pandemic, resulting in many staff members working from home, the Agency has not been able to print and post, a large number of boat registration discs (plates) to boaters.

This means that a large number of boats may appear not to be registered, when in fact, they are.

Waterways officers are however able to continue with compliance checks along our waterways because they can determine the status of a boat's registration very easily from the database.

As more and more people are getting afloat after lockdown, the Agency is making every effort to increase its presence along our rivers, to make sure everybody understands the 'rules of the river' and what they need to do to comply with them. This is especially important with so many new customers taking to the water for the first time, particularly in kayaks and stand-up paddle boards (SUP).

From August and over the rest of the year, The Environment Agency will be stepping up its activity to ensure that Anglian Waterways are safe and that every boat on the water is registered for 2020 , whilst also ensuring that Agency staff are able to fulfil those responsibilities, without risk to themselves.

Not registering a boat when required by law is not only a criminal offence, it also deprives our waterways of the income that is so crucial to manage and maintain them for future use.