

Boat licence fees for 2020-21

Earlier this week (31 Oct) we announced that headline private and business boat licence fees will rise by 2.5% from 1 April 2020.

As [previously announced](#), in March 2018, following the national boat licence consultation, a number of changes will be made to licence fees over five years.

From 1 April 2020, a 2.5% ‘prompt payment’ discount (reduced from 5%) will apply for those who pay on time in full, and a new 2.5% discount will apply for those who manage their payments online including, for the first time, for boaters paying by direct debit. This means that boaters who may not be able to afford to pay in one lump sum will also be able to benefit from a small discount on the full licence fee.

In addition to the current length-based pricing, from April 2020 the Trust will start the phased introduction of additional pricing bands for boat widths over 2.16m (7ft 1”), as announced in March 2018, with a surcharge of 5% applied until March 2021 (when it will increase to 10%). This means that boats over 2.16m wide will be subject to an increase in licence fees of 7.6% overall from 1 April 2020.

Jon Horsfall, head of customer service support, said: “Income from private boat licences accounted for around 10% of our annual income last year, and helps ensure that we can carry out the vast amount of work needed to keep the waterways available to boaters.

“We know that not every boater is in a position to pay their licence in a single payment so we’re pleased to be able to extend a portion of the previous ‘prompt payment’ discount to those paying by direct debit, as well as all those managing their payments online. We’d encourage boaters to sign up to online licensing to benefit from the 2.5% discount.

“The changes we’re making to boat licensing are intended to ensure the financial contribution made by boaters towards the cost of looking after the waterways is spread fairly across the boating community. We are staggering the changes for wider vessels that we announced last year over a five-year period from 1 April 2020 so there’s no sudden impact on any boaters.”

