



# **Elmbridge Borough Council Boat Dwellers Accommodation Assessment 2022**

Report  
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# 1. Introduction

## The Study

- 1.1 The Elmbridge Boat Dwellers Accommodation Assessment (BDAA) considers the accommodation needs of households living on boats on the River Thames through Elmbridge Borough Council area.
- 1.2 The BDAA provides an evidence base to enable the Council to comply with their requirements towards Boat Dwellers under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 and the Housing and Planning Act 2016.
- 1.3 In addition, the revised NPPF (July 2021) sets out that in determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. Paragraph 62 then states that *'Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes).'*
- 1.4 The wider needs of boat dwellers are now starting to be specifically addressed as part new Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) or Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessments (HEDNA).

## Definitions

- 1.5 Provisions set out in the Housing and Planning Act now include a duty (under Section 8 of the 1985 Housing Act that covers the requirement for a periodical review of housing needs) for local authorities to consider the needs of people residing in, or resorting to, their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed, or places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. Draft Guidance<sup>1</sup> relating to this section of the Act has been published that sets out how the assessment should be completed.

## Methodology

- 1.6 A mixed methodology was used for this assessment including the following:
  - » A desk based review of existing Needs Assessments and other relevant local studies and existing national and local policy, guidance, and best practice, plus a review of the Environment Agency responsibilities relating to the Thames from licensing to water quality.
  - » Telephone interviews with the National Bargee Travellers Association and the Canal and Rivers Trust.
  - » A scoping focus group with 4 boat dwellers on the Thames in Elmbridge carried out by video to avoid the risk of Covid infection.
  - » Each of these fed into the methodology and questionnaire for a face-to-face 'doorstep' survey of boat dwellers living on the Thames through Elmbridge. The questionnaire was agreed with the Council and the interviews took place in early January 2022. Further details of the survey methodology are given below in the Survey chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> "Draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats." (March 2016)

## 2. Summary of main results

### Key points from the survey of boat dwellers in Elmbridge

- 2.1 The survey identified a need for 10 licensed permanent moorings.
- 2.2 These moorings should be a range of sizes from 30ft to over 50ft if they are to accommodate existing boats.
- 2.3 Boat dwellers say there are too few temporary moorings, but it is not possible to assess how many are needed. A shortage of temporary moorings could have a detrimental effect on where leisure tourism boats are moored.
- 2.4 On a very rough estimate, there are around 40 live aboard boats on the Thames through Elmbridge.
- 2.5 The majority of boats in the survey were narrow boats and broad beam canal boats; a total of 16 out of 25 interviews.
- 2.6 Boat sizes vary from 20-30ft upwards, but the largest numbers in the survey were either over 50ft (10 out of 25 boats) or 30-40ft (6 boats).
- 2.7 10 out of 25 boat dwellers interviewed said they were on unlicensed permanent moorings, with another 4 unlicensed that are temporary moorings at part of the year and one additional unlicensed mooring which visits the borough.
- 2.8 There are a variety of reasons for living on a boat. Three of the main ones are; by choice, because of being unable to afford housing, and access to work.
- 2.9 Of the 19 boats with people living on them permanently, three quarters (14; 74%) are single person occupancy. Another 4 (21%) are occupied by two people, with only 1 boat being occupied by 3 people and none with more than three people.
- 2.10 A large majority of boat dwellers in the survey were of working age with a small number of retirement age and 3 persons aged under 18. Over two thirds were male and under one third were female.
- 2.11 Three quarters (18; 72%) of the 25 boat dwellers interviewed were in employment, either full or part time or self-employed. Some found that living on a boat hindered their access to employment.
- 2.12 The majority (21 of the 25; 84%) have lived on a boat in Elmbridge for at least a year, with 8 having lived here for over 5 years.
- 2.13 10 out of 25 boating households (40%) are at risk of eviction.
- 2.14 Some services are difficult for boat dwellers to access. Notably, around a quarter to a third find it difficult to access fresh water or rubbish disposal. One in five find it difficult to access sewage pump out.
- 2.15 Two thirds of the boat dwellers (16 out of 25; 64%) consider existing permanent moorings to be unaffordable.
- 2.16 15 (60%) of the boat dwellers consider the current terms and conditions for inhabited moorings to be about right, though 7 consider them to be too strict.
- 2.17 It was found that access to work and access to shops and other services made the location suitable for permanent moorings.

- 2.18 Two thirds of the boat dwellers (16 out of 25; 64%) consider that there are not enough temporary moorings, but another 16 consider those temporary moorings that exist are in the right place.
- 2.19 Three quarters of boat dwellers interviewed said that relations with other local people were generally good.

# 3. Guidance on Assessing the Need for Boat Dwellers

## Boat Dwellers

- 3.1 Draft DCLG<sup>2</sup> Guidance provides advice on how to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to moorings for houseboats. The draft guidance was issued in March 2016 with no consultation attached to it and has yet to be issued as official guidance. However, it is understood to have been criticised by organisations representing boat dwellers for concentrating too much on identifying need from caravan dwellers.
- 3.2 As far as need for boat dwellers is concerned, it cannot be assumed that all need can be met through the provision of additional moorings as many boat dwellers do not seek permanent moorings and navigate waterways on a permanent basis. As such, other issues that need to be considered include the availability and distance between facilities such as water taps, rubbish disposal, chemical toilet disposal and fuel pumps; the threat of eviction from moorings is seen as inappropriate; restrictions placed on boat dwellers through licence restrictions; and access to ‘off-side’ moorings – i.e. those not on a tow path.
- 3.3 As with Gypsies and Travellers who do not meet the planning definition of Travellers and wider caravan dwellers, permanent boat residents also form part of the OAN because they will be included in the overall population and household projections.
- 3.4 The Canal and River Trust<sup>3</sup> have reported that the total number of continuous cruiser licences was 4,400 in 2014. Out of those 4,400 boats 23% moved less than 5 kilometres, and 45% moved under 10 kilometres in a year, so a high number of boats are moving around relatively small areas of the canal network. The Canal and River Trust suggest that this is due to affordability as much as preference, with many households moving onto houseboats to find cheaper accommodation.
- 3.5 The current Draft Guidance is not particularly relevant or helpful when it comes to assessing need for boat dwellers. The first issue to consider is the definition of a houseboat. The Housing and Planning Act defines a “houseboat” as a boat or similar structure designed or adapted for use as a place to live. However, this conflicts with the definition of a houseboat under waterways legislation (for example Section 3 of the British Waterways Act 1971). This suggests that a houseboat is a static vessel and is not used for navigation, as opposed to more mobile boat dwellers who do travel either from permanent moorings or as continual cruisers.
- 3.6 In terms of recent surveys of boat dwellers, the Canal and River Trust undertook a detailed survey of London’s houseboat dwellers<sup>4</sup> between September and October 2016. In total they received responses from 1,323 boat dwellers who had been recorded on London’s waterways in the previous year. In summary the survey found that:
  - » 58% of respondents to the survey say they use their boat as their primary place of residence.

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<sup>2</sup> now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

<sup>3</sup> <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/2305.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/refresh/media/thumbnail/30901-whos-on-londons-boats-survey-summary-report.pdf>

- » 50% of those who responded said that affordability/financial reasons were their motivation for living on a boat.
- » 50% have been living on boats on London's waterways for three years or less.
- » Over 70% of respondents to the survey said that they owned their boats outright, a further 11% said they owned their boat with a loan or mortgage.
- » The top three specific improvement people want to see on the London waterways are (1) more mooring places, (2) more mooring rings, (3) more water points.
- » 45% of respondents said they would have some or definite interest in a mooring if permanent or long-term moorings were more readily available in the London.

<sup>3.7</sup> In summary, half of all London respondents reported that they lived on a houseboat because of affordability issues; nearly half of respondents would be interested in a permanent mooring if one was available; and the largest issues raised by boat dwellers was a lack of moorings.

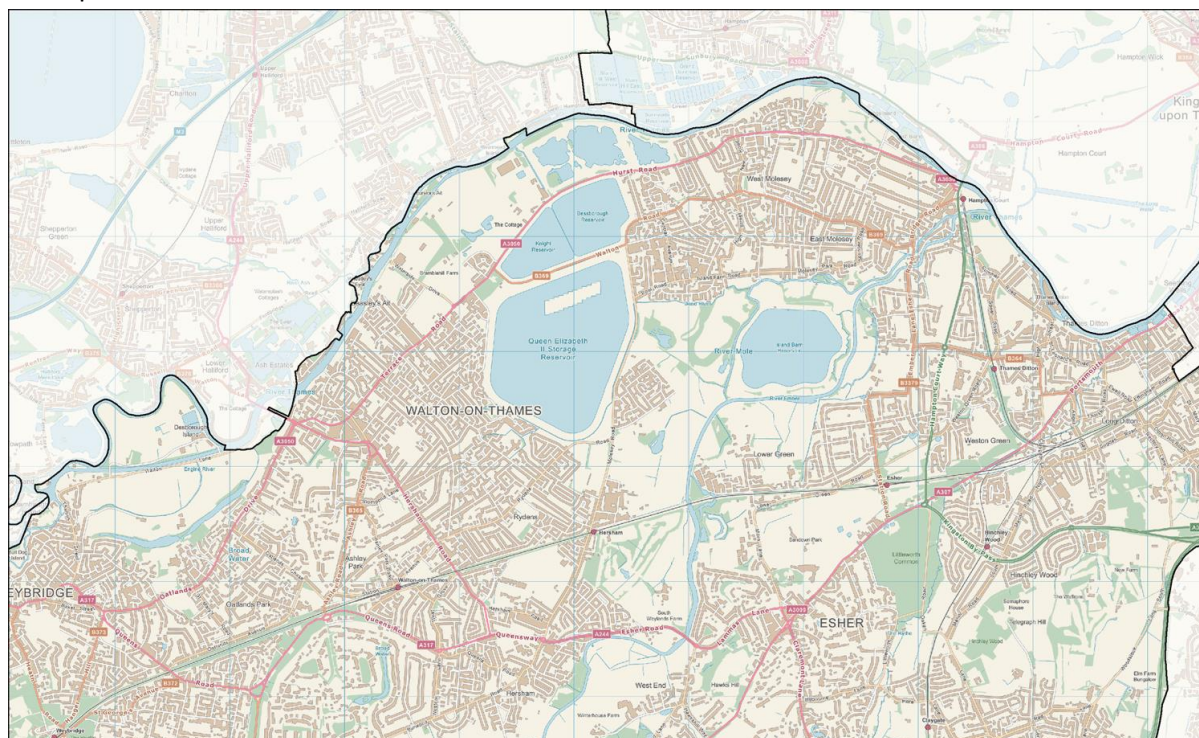


## 4. Survey of Boat Dwellers

### Interviews with boat dwellers in Elmbridge

- 4.1 This chapter presents the results of the major component of this study; a detailed survey of the boat dwellers along the Thames through Elmbridge, including the base data used in the needs assessment along with a range of other data that can be used to inform policy.
- 4.2 We achieved 25 interviews with boat dwellers, mostly living permanently on their boats, and estimate that there were at the time of the survey around 40 live aboard boats moored on the Thames through Elmbridge. It is difficult to count live aboard boats accurately because in the absence of an owner, it is only possible to judge the accommodation status by external signs of permanent occupancy such as stocks of wood, canoes or other small boats, bikes, electricity hook up and water, storage facilities, plants or gardens, other towpath-side facilities and so on. However, none of these is conclusive evidence of the boat being a permanent dwelling. A boat can be moored on a licensed permanent mooring without it being inhabited as a dwelling. Consequently there could be more than 40 live aboard boats on the River through Elmbridge.
- 4.3 The interviews were carried out between 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 (inclusive), which included a weekend and covered the length of the River from Thames Ditton to a few hundred metres of the River to the West of Shepperton Lock and Weybridge Landing between Weybridge and Shepperton. Some of the questions are imprecise because of the geography of the River. For example, a question such as *'How many boats do you have within Elmbridge Borough Council area'* is difficult to answer unless boat owners have some way of knowing for certain which local authority their boats are moored in, such as paying Council Tax.
- 4.4 The interviews were carried out by an interviewer walking the River towpath for the entire length of the Thames within the designated area to identify and request an interview. To ensure maximum take up, potential interviewees were offered a later appointment in place of the immediate interview and the alternative of completing an online questionnaire. Several requested a later appointment. There was no take up of the online questionnaire. Where permission was granted, the survey included boat yards and islands on the Thames that are within the Elmbridge BC boundary.

4.5 The map below shows the area covered.



4.6 In general, boat dwellers were happy to give an interview; the survey response was governed entirely by the presence of a member of the household rather than refusals or other reasons.

4.7 The results of individual questions are presented under the headings:

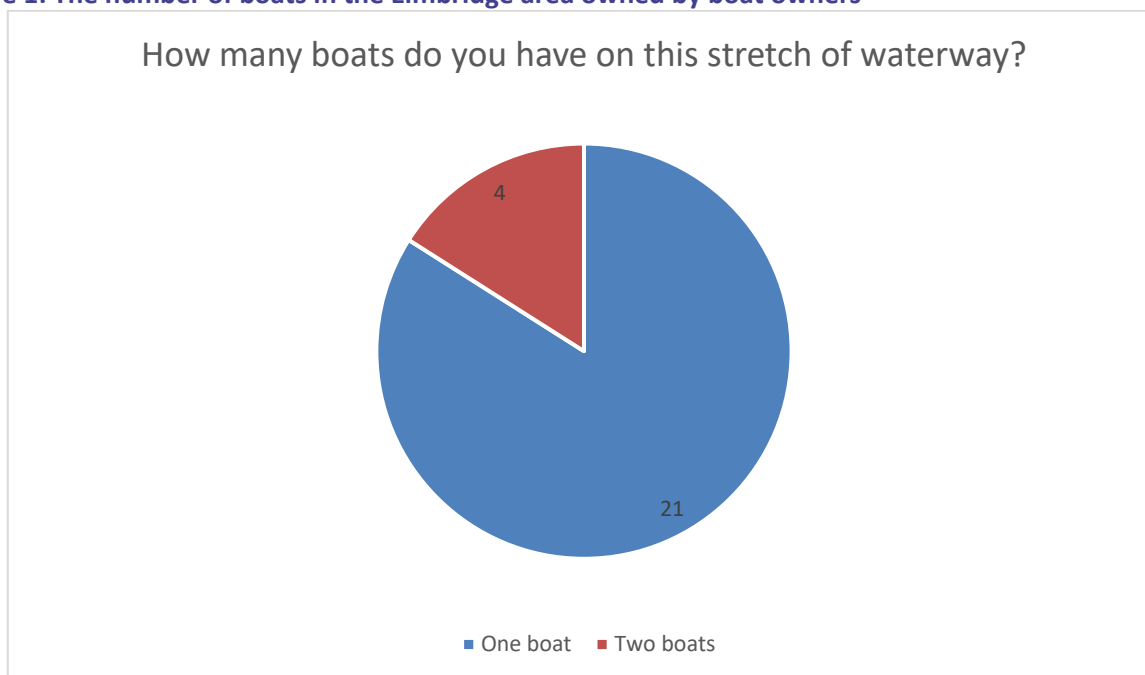
- » Profile of moored boats
- » Profile of boat dwelling households
- » Current and future accommodation
- » Facilities and services
- » Permanent Moorings
- » Temporary moorings
- » Relations with Other Local People.

4.8 Because of the small number of interviews it is best to consider the survey results using numbers rather than percentages, but percentages are also given in some places in case they are helpful to picture the relative scale of the responses.

## Profile of moored boats

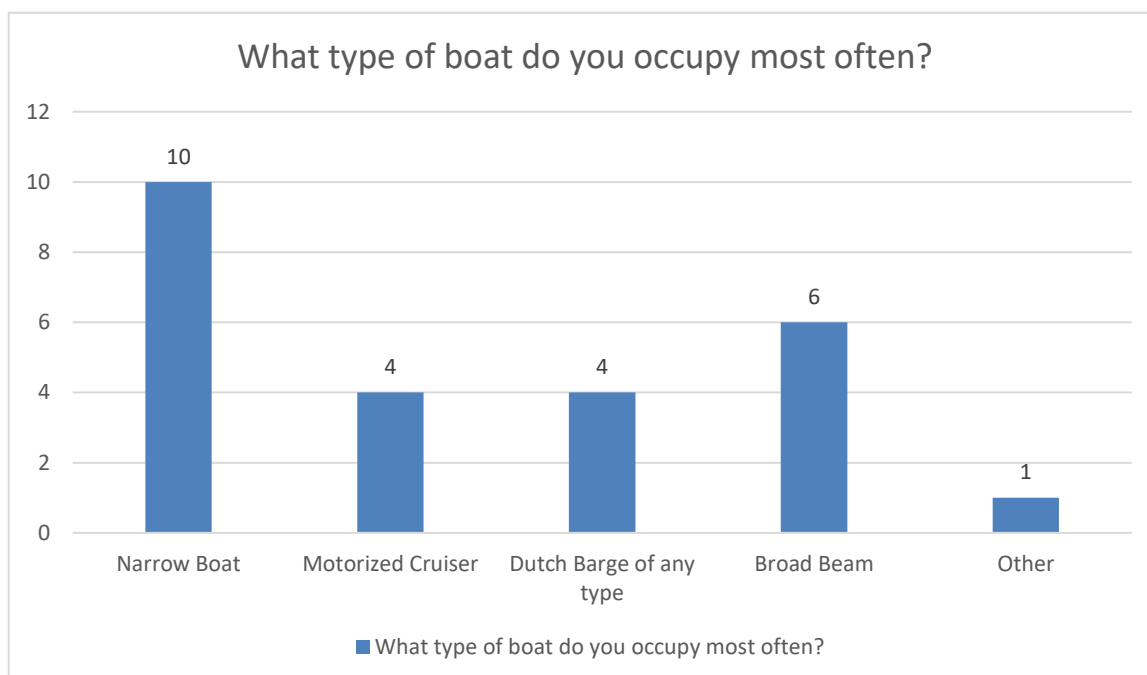
- 4.9 The majority of boat owners (21 respondents; 84%) have one boat in the Elmbridge area with the remaining 4 respondents having two boats. No interviewees had more than two boats in this area.

**Figure 1: The number of boats in the Elmbridge area owned by boat owners**



- 4.10 The most common types of boats occupied by respondents are narrow boats (10) and their broad beam equivalent (6). Four respondents occupied Dutch barges of one type or another, which are typically much larger, especially in the beam. The 'Other' boat was a Scottish fishing trawler.

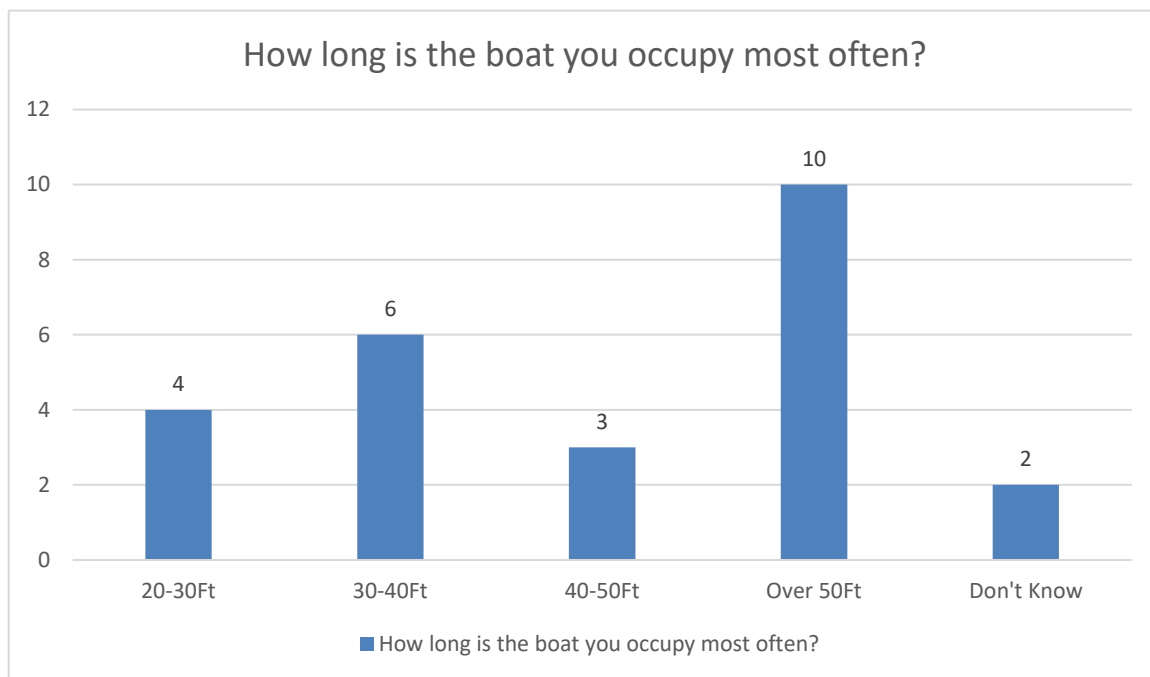
**Figure 2: Type of boat occupied**



- 4.11 The largest number of respondents occupy boats that are over 50 ft long, which is what might be expected for live aboard boats, with another three using 40-50ft boats. Boats under 40ft were motorised cruisers and narrow boats, while boats of 40ft and longer included narrow boats, broad beam, Dutch barges and the

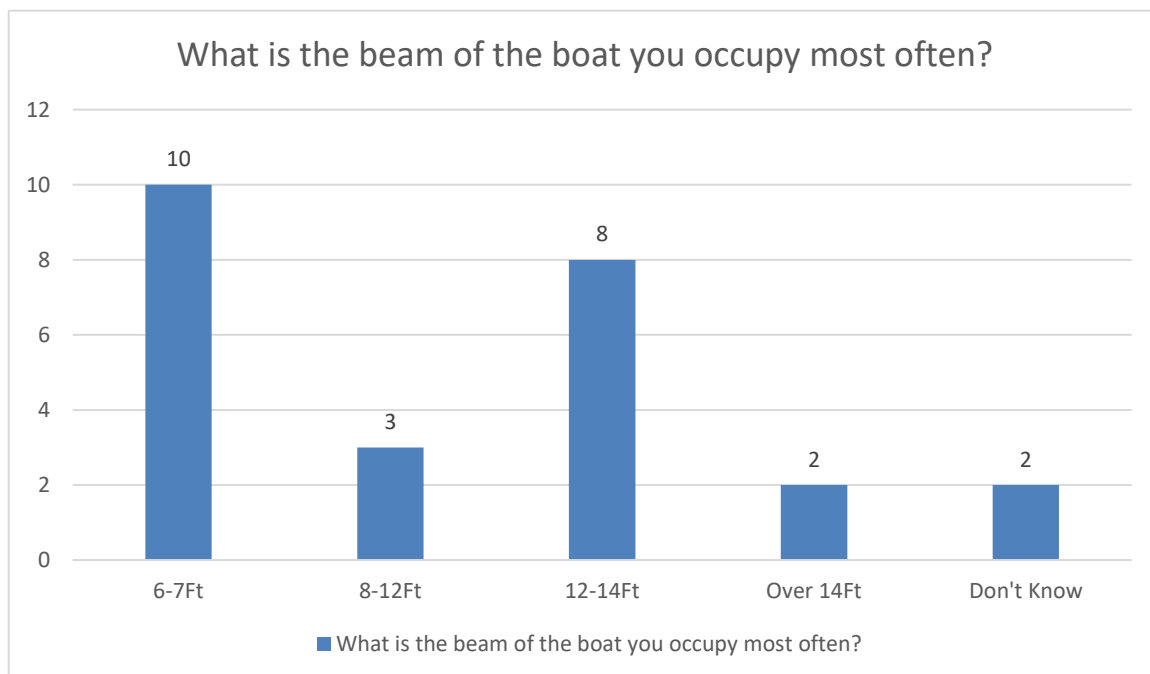
fishing trawler. Excluding 'Don't know', 56% of boats are 40ft or over.

**Figure 3: Boat lengths**



<sup>4.12</sup> The largest number of boats (10 boats; 43% excluding 'Don't know') are narrow beam of 6-7ft, the standard width of a narrow boat. Another 8 (32%) are about double that width, being 12-14ft; the standard width of a broad beam canal-type boat and a common beam for Dutch barges.

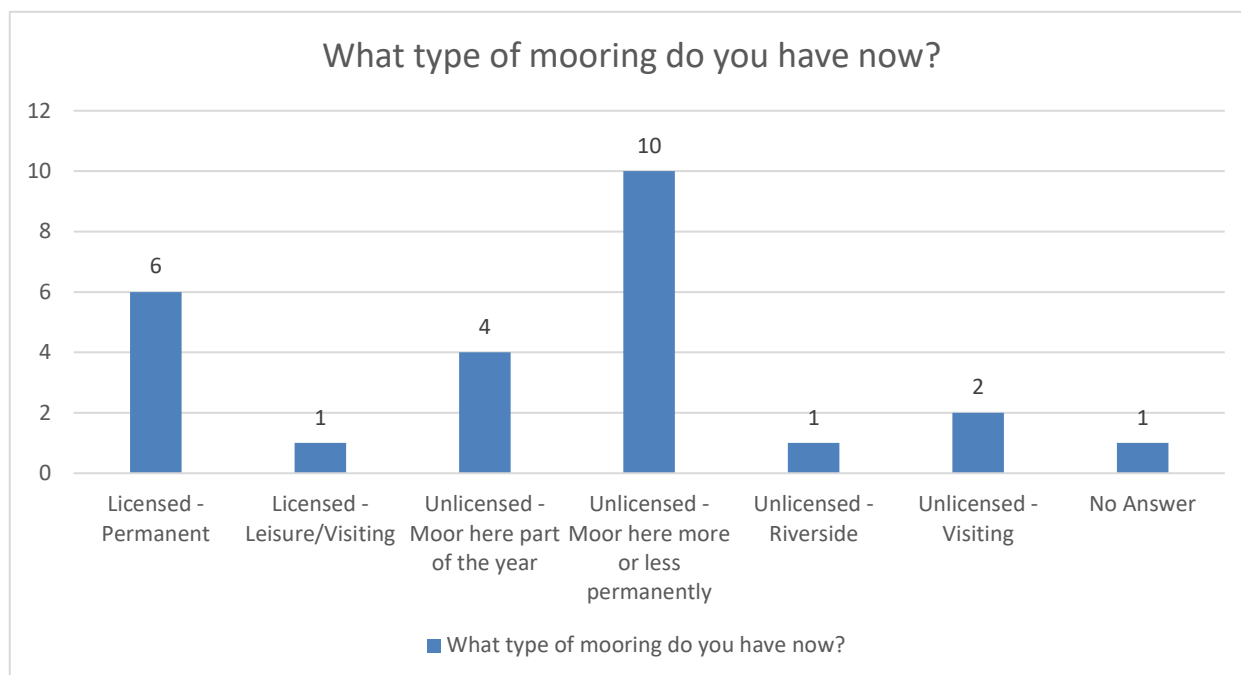
**Figure 4: Boat beams**



<sup>4.13</sup> Only a quarter of boats dwellers interviewed (6; 25% excluding 'No answer') have a licensed permanent mooring, with another one having a licensed visiting mooring. Ten say they moor unlicensed in Elmbridge 'more or less permanently' with another 4 mooring for part of the year. These 4 and the one who is moored 'unlicensed riverside' do not fit easily into dichotomy of 'permanent' or 'temporary' as they can be moored for a significant time each year; this is less than 'permanent', but more than would normally be understood as 'temporary' (perhaps meaning a couple of weeks or a month, but not more). This is the majority of

respondents; a total of 14, (58%). Unlicensed ‘permanent’ and ‘temporary’ moorings were self-defined by respondents.

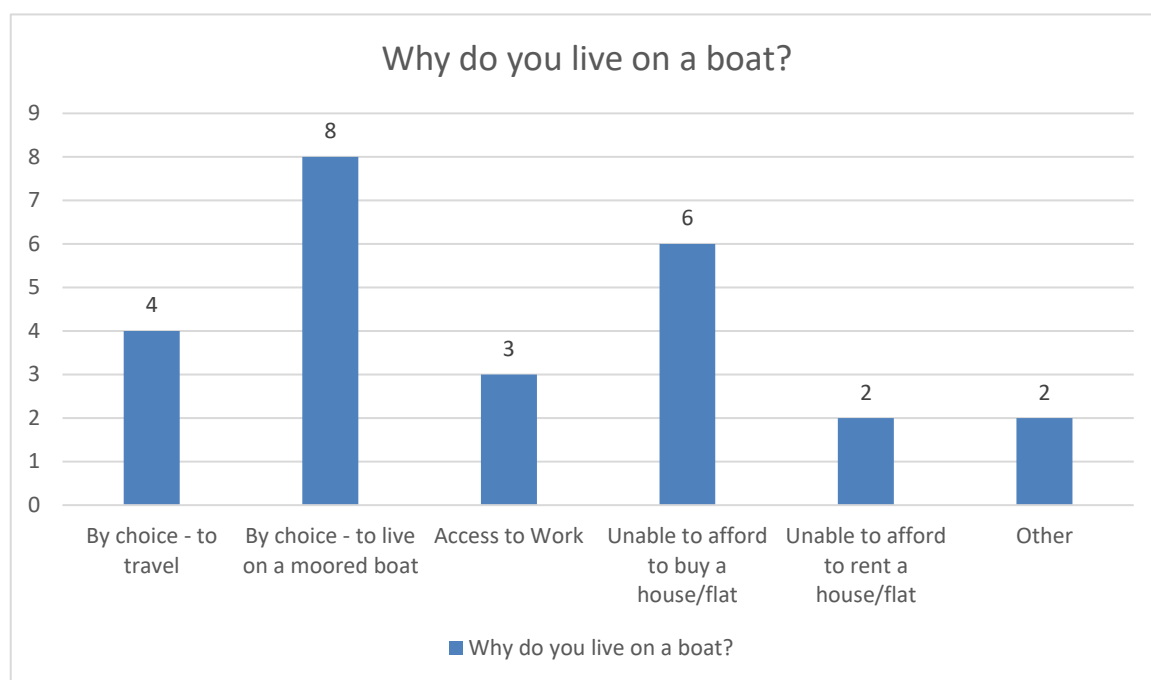
**Figure 5: Current mooring status**



### Profile of boat dwelling households

- 4.14 Boat dwellers were asked where on the river they moored most often. All 25 answered, with 16 saying they moored where they are now. Another nine moved between where they are now and other parts of the Thames nearby; Hampton, Walton, Shepperton and Kingston. One responded simply ‘on a canal’.
- 4.15 Asked where they travel most often, 16 boat dwellers said that they did not travel or only travelled for day trips. Another did not travel but intends to move to Bristol in the Spring. Only one cruised regularly. Another 7 travelled on the Thames to local destinations, mostly towards Windsor.
- 4.16 A total of 19 respondents (three quarters; 76%) can be assumed to be living on a moored boat without intending to travel. There are several reasons for this: 8 respondents chose to live on a moored boat, 3 lived on a boat for access to work, and 8 because of being unable to afford to rent or buy a house or flat.
- 4.17 Another 4 chose to live on a boat so as to travel. The ‘Other’ reason was lifestyle; it is unclear whether this was to live on a moored boat or to travel.

**Figure 6: Reasons for living on a boat**



4.18 Boat dwellers were asked if they had another home that they can use. The results of this question crossed with the reasons for living on a boat are shown in the table below.

4.19 Seven had a house or flat and one had another boat, of which 4 lived on a boat to travel or for ‘lifestyle’. Of the 19 who live on a boat without intending to travel, 3 have access to a house or a flat that they use. This gives the following important results:

- » 8 households live on boats because of being unable to afford to rent (2) or to buy (6) bricks and mortar properties and may need appropriate affordable housing to rent or affordable home ownership.
- » 1 lives on a boat for ‘access to work’ but has no other home and may need appropriate affordable housing to rent or affordable home ownership. This household report being unable to afford to rent or buy a property.

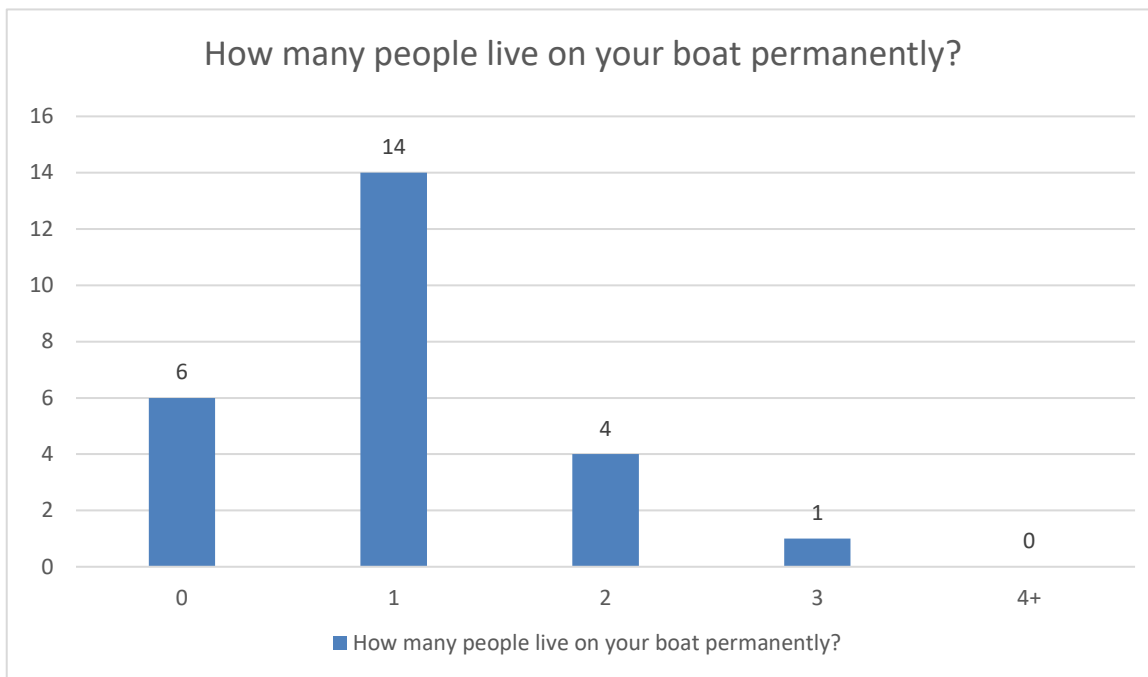
**Figure 7: Reasons for living on a boat and having another home**

	No other home	Yes - Another boat	Yes - House or flat	TOTAL
Access to Work	1	1	1	3
By choice - to live on a moored boat	7		1	8
By choice - to travel	2		2	4
Lifestyle			2	2
Unable to afford to buy a house/flat	5		1	6
Unable to afford to rent a house/flat	2			2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>25</b>

4.20 Of the 19 boats with people living on them permanently, three quarters (14; 74%) are single person occupancy. Another 4 (21%) are occupied by two people, with only 1 boat being occupied by 3 people and none with more than three people.

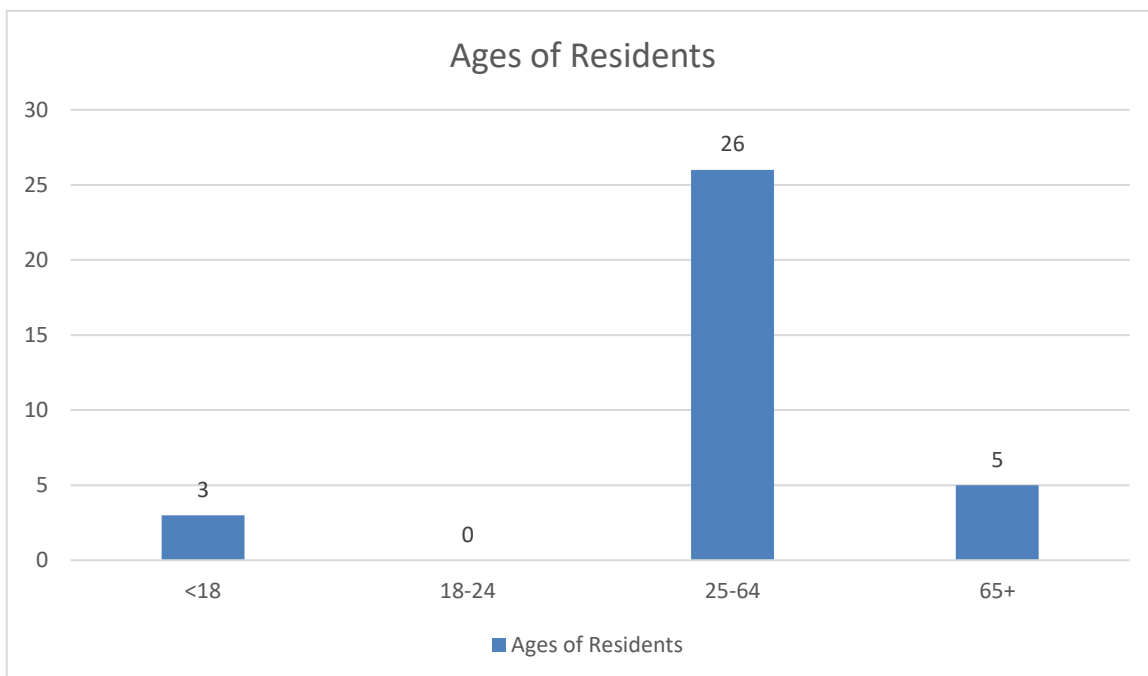
4.21 Considering only the 19 boats with at least one permanent resident, the mean occupancy is 1.3 persons per boat while the mean and mode averages are both 1 person per boat.

**Figure 8: Occupancy**



<sup>4.22</sup> In total there were 31 permanent residents on the boats. In addition, 8 boats had occupants who lived there for part of the year but not permanently (10 people in total). When asked for occupants ages, 34 residents were recorded; some of these will be visiting rather than permanent residents. Nevertheless, the chart below gives a clear profile of residents. Of the 34 residents ages recorded, 26 (three quarters; 76%) were of working age (25 to 64) with 3 being under 18 and 5 being over 64<sup>5</sup>.

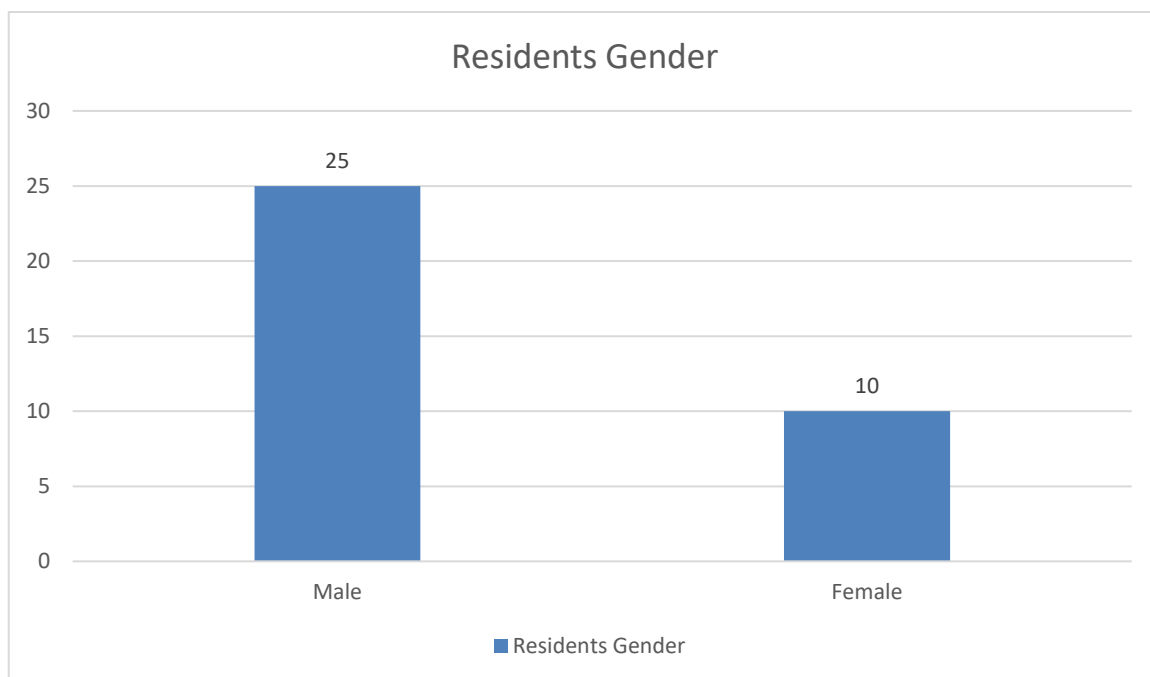
**Figure 9: Ages of residents**



<sup>5</sup> The age question will be refined in future surveys

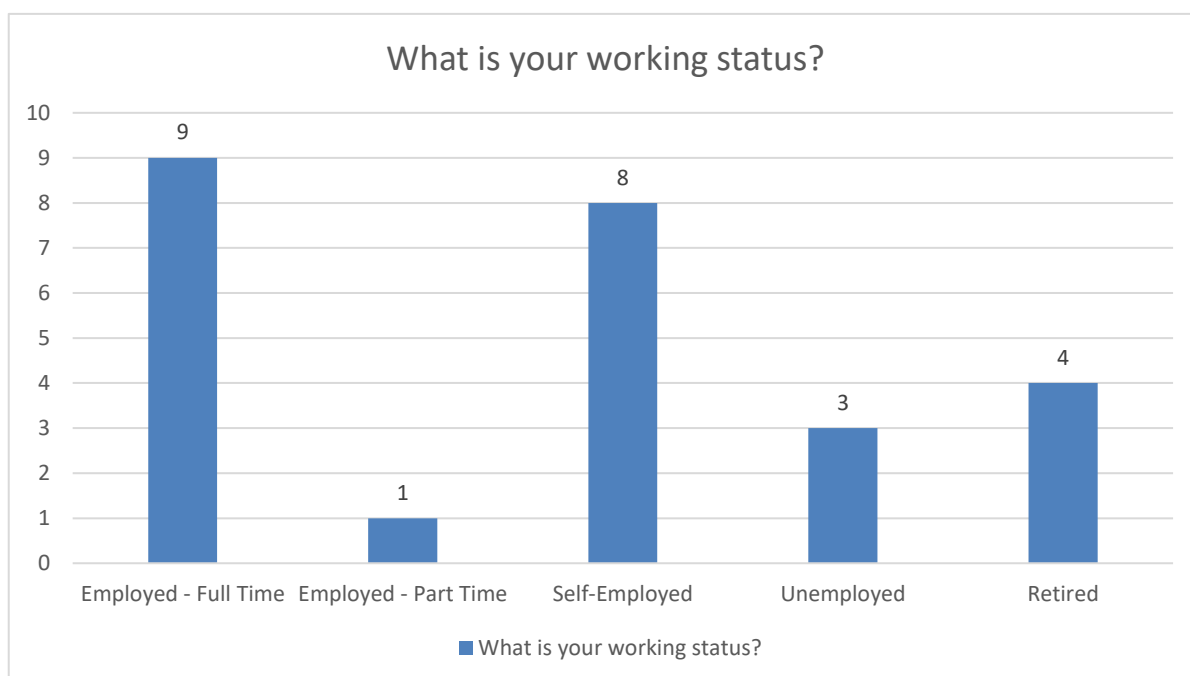
4.23 Similar to the age question, the responses to the gender of residents include both permanent and visiting occupants; 35 in this case. Of the 35, over two thirds (25; 71%) were male and under one third (10; 29%) were female. No other gender identities were given.

**Figure 10: Residents genders**



4.24 In total, 18, or three quarters (72%) of the 25 boat dwellers interviewed were in employment, either full or part time or self-employed. Three were unemployed and were 4 retired.

**Figure 11: Working status**

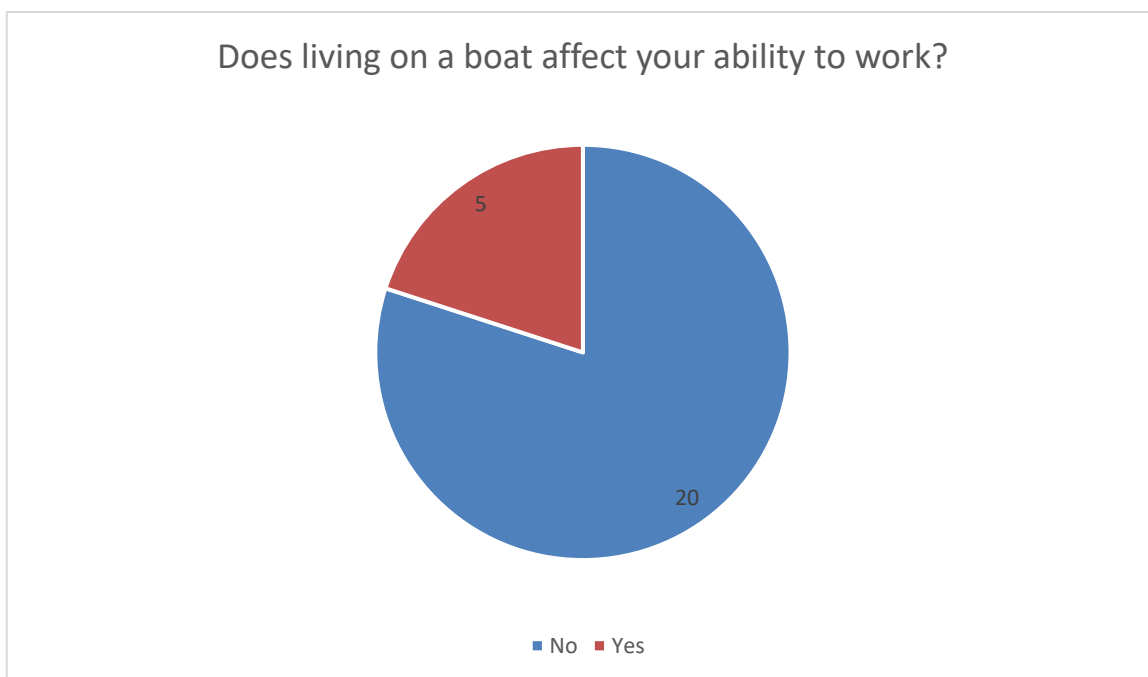


4.25 Five respondents considered that living on a boat affects their ability to work. Of these, 2 said that the impact was positive, allowing them to be closer to work, while the negative impacts identified cold causing lack of sleep, the time taken to access fresh water and other essentials, and "If I move the boat, I have to find parking for the van too".



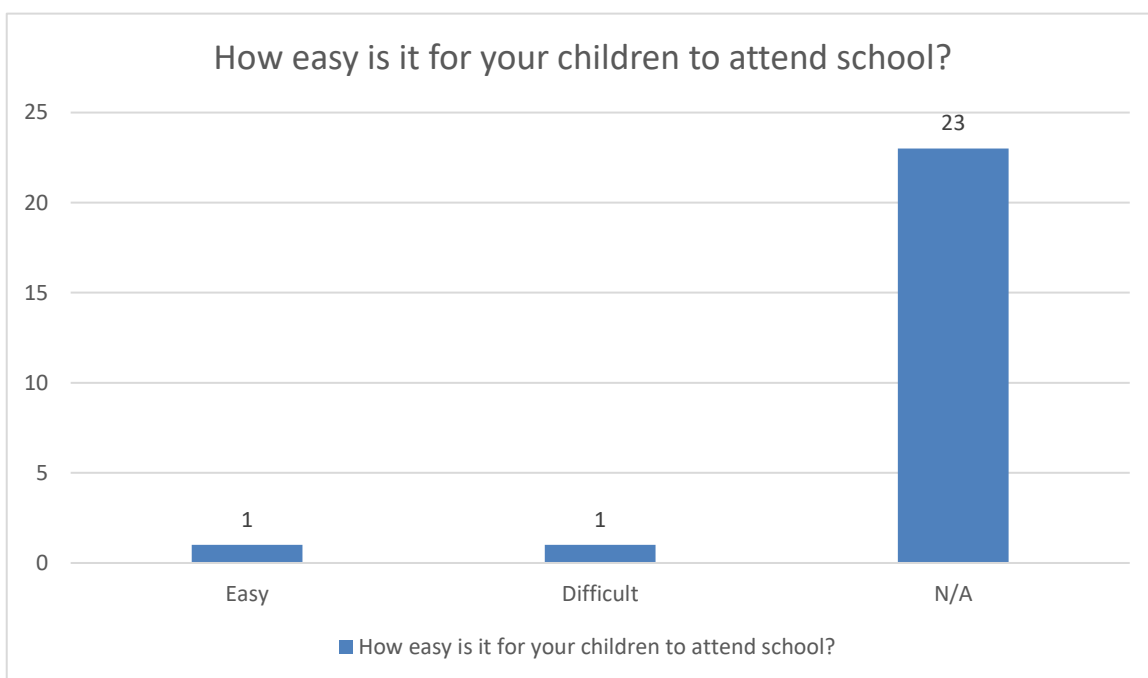
4.26 Asked what would improve access to work, 2 requested improvements to the towpath including street lighting. Two more requested closer public transport and the extension of the Oyster Card to the area. The final request was for better access to water, electricity and sewage disposal.

**Figure 12: Ability to work**



4.27 Two respondents answered the question 'How easy is it for your children to attend school?'. One found it easy and one difficult.

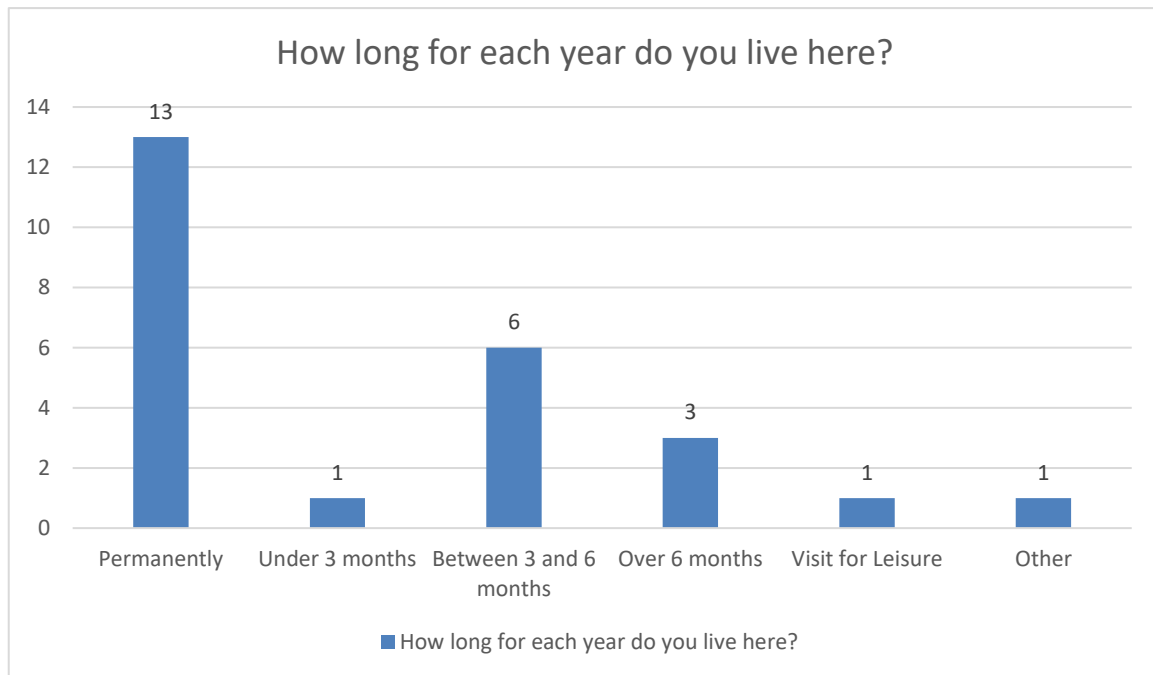
**Figure 13: Ease of attending school**



## Current and future accommodation

4.28 The boat dwellers interviewed reside in the Elmbridge area for all or much of the year. Two thirds (16 or 64%) reside in this area for at least 6 months of the year. Another 6 reside in the area for between 3 and 6 months.

**Figure 14: Length of time each year resident in the area**



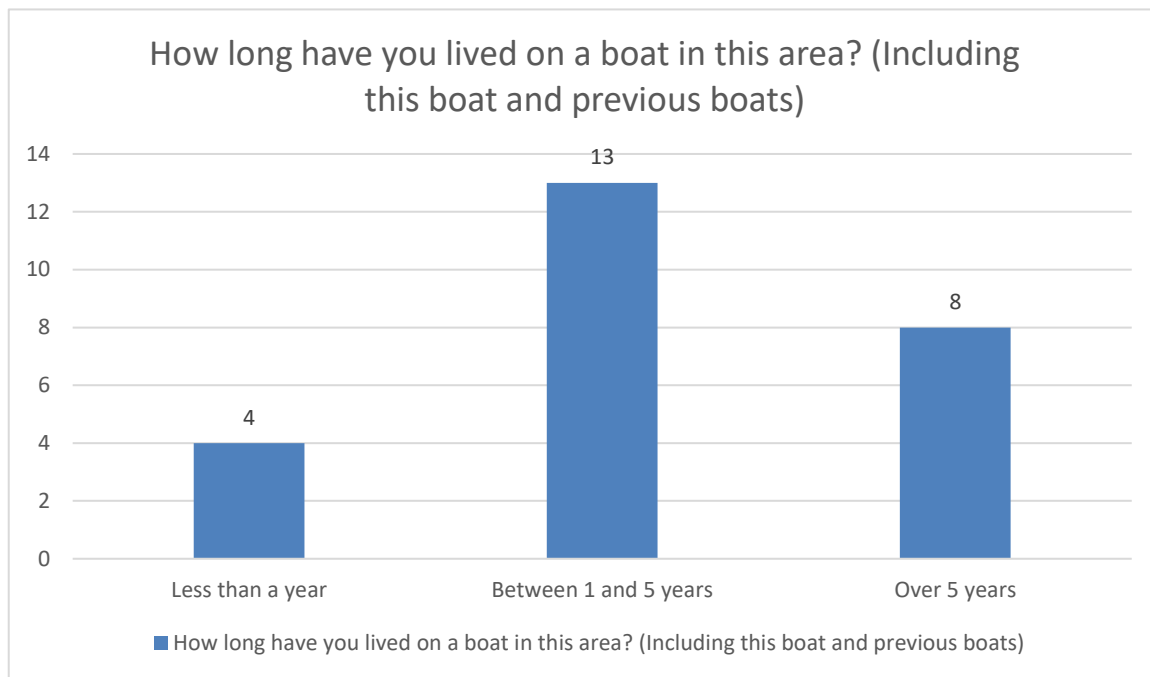
4.29 The majority (21; 84%) have lived on a boat in this area for at least a year, with 8 (one third; 32%) living on a boat in the area for over 5 years.

4.30 All 10 of the boat dwellers who are moored permanently on unlicensed moorings have lived in this area for at least a year, with 4 having lived here for over 5 years.

4.31 Of the 10 boat dwellers who are moored permanently on unlicensed moorings:

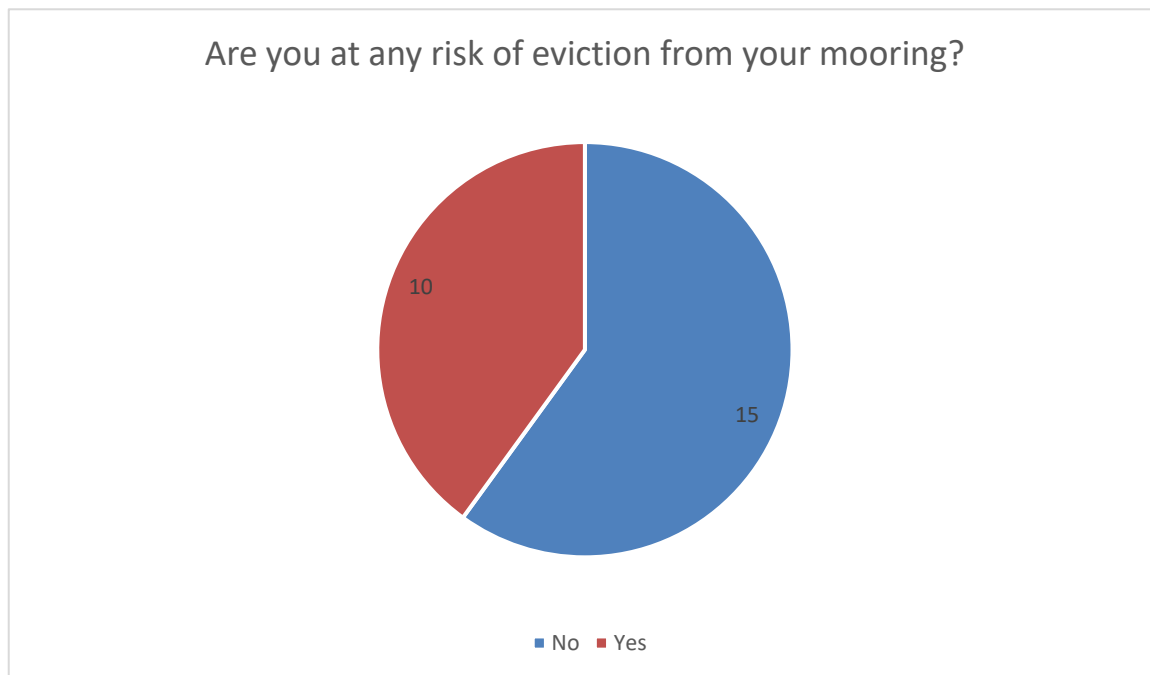
- » 7 are looking for permanent licensed moorings.
- » 1 intends to move their boat out of the area in the next 5 years.
- » None are intending to move to a house or a flat.

Figure 15: Number of years resident in the area



4.32 Ten out of the 25 are at risk of eviction. Of these, 4 said they had planning issues, while 6 simply said that their mooring was not permanent and licensed.

Figure 16: At risk of eviction



4.33 Ten boating households are at risk of eviction. While all those at risk of eviction are unlicensed, not all boats on unlicensed moorings are at risk of eviction.

**Figure 17: Moorings at risk of eviction**

Moorings	At risk of eviction	Not at risk of eviction	TOTAL
Licensed – Permanent		6	6
Licensed - Leisure/Visiting		1	1
Unlicensed - Moor here more or less permanently	7	3	10
Unlicensed - Moor here part of the year	1	3	4
Unlicensed – Riverside	1		1
Unlicensed – Visiting	1	1	2
No Answer		1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>

4.34 Fifteen boat dwellers say they are looking for licensed permanent moorings, 5 of which already have licensed permanent moorings (the 6<sup>th</sup> respondent who has a licensed permanent mooring answered 'Don't know'). This gives us the base number of permanent moorings required:

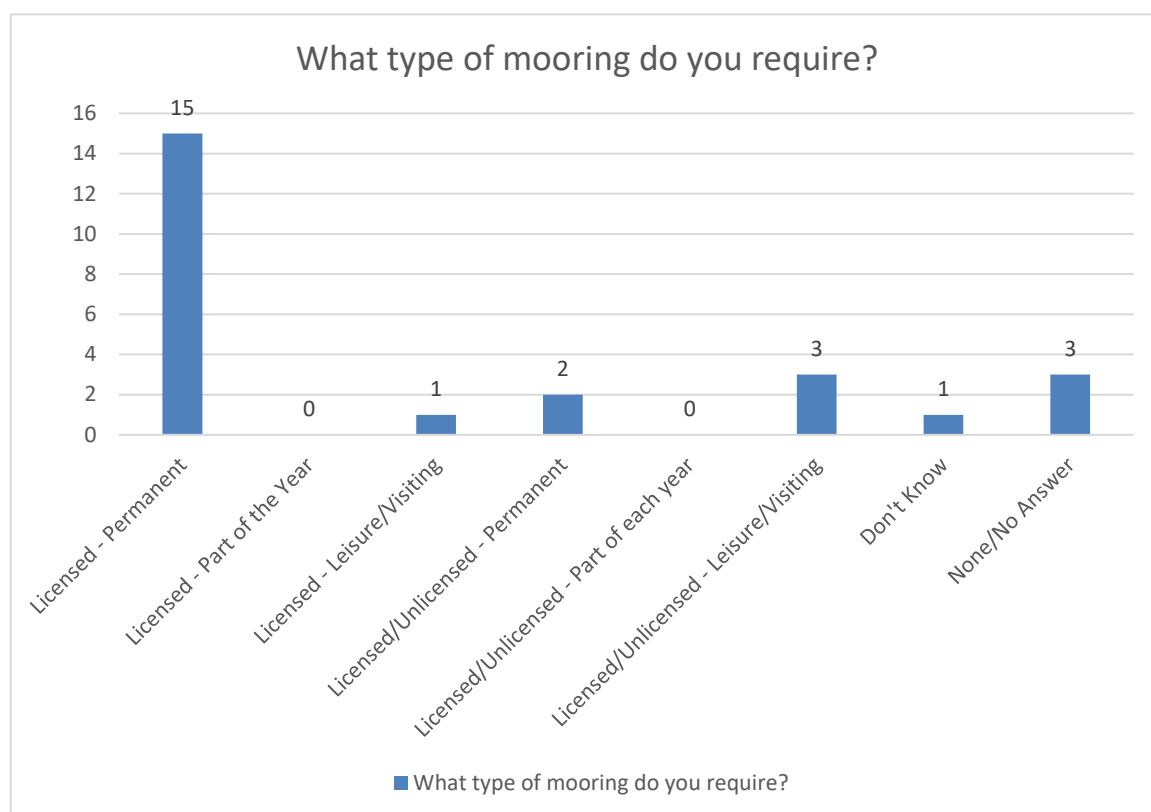
**Ten boat dwellers moored on the Thames through Elmbridge are moored on insecure moorings and require licensed permanent moorings.**

4.35 Figure 18 shows the type of moorings that interviewees said they required. Some require licensed moorings, while others feel that they would be equally well served by licensed or unlicensed moorings as long as the moorings are secure<sup>6</sup>. One boat dweller moors in the area for part of the year on one or more unlicensed moorings and is looking for a licensed temporary mooring:

**One boat dweller moored on the Thames through Elmbridge moors on insecure moorings and requires a licensed temporary mooring.**

<sup>6</sup> While licensed moorings provide security, unlicensed moorings can also be secure in that the boat dwellers are not at threat of eviction, usually by agreement with the riparian land owner. While the land owner could decide to evict at a later date, in many cases informal agreements between boat dweller and riparian land owners work to the satisfaction of both parties.

Figure 18: Type of mooring required



4.36 Boat dwellers moving intentions over the next 5 years are shown below. 15 boat dwellers intend to remain on their current boat in this area. Another 4 intend to move to another boat or keep a boat in the area. Four are looking to move their boat to another area.

Figure 19: Moving intentions over the next 5 years

Current mooring	Moving intentions						Total
	Move out of this area, but keep your boat in this area	Move to a house in this area	Move to another boat in this area	Move your boat to another area	Remain on this boat	No Answer	
Licensed - Permanent					6		6
Licensed - Leisure/Visiting						1	1
Unlicensed - Moor here more or less permanently	1		2	1	6		10
Unlicensed - Moor here part of the year			1	2	1		4
Unlicensed - Riverside					1		1
Unlicensed - Visiting		1		1			2
No Answer					1		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>25</b>

## Facilities and services

4.37 Figure 20 shows the ease of access boat dwellers have to facilities, ordered by boat dwellers having no access or finding it difficult to access. The key points from this table are:

- » **8 find it difficult to access rubbish disposal.** Some pointed to the risk of attracting rats if they are unable to dispose of rubbish easily.

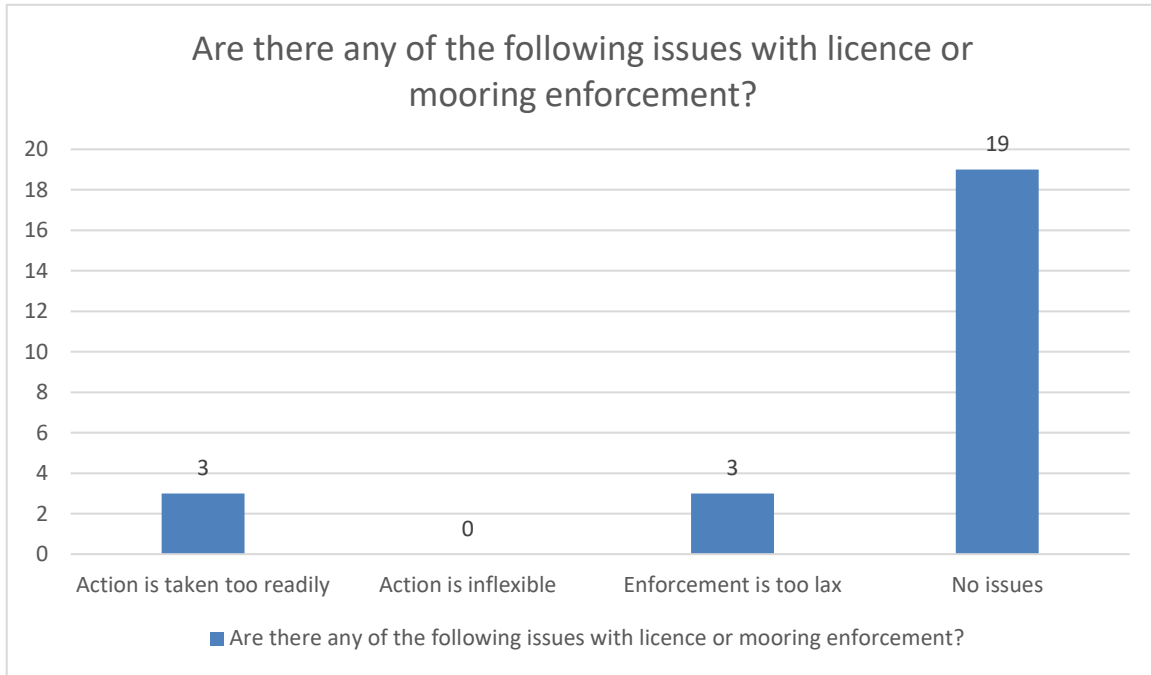
- » 7 find it difficult to access fresh water.
- » 7 signal the need to improve towpaths.
- » 7 find it difficult to access maintenance facilities for either DIY or paid maintenance.
- » 5 find it difficult to access sewage pump out.
- » Boat dwellers either can or cannot access electricity hook up; 9 cannot access electricity hook up.
- » 4 have no access to broadband, though the majority (18) do have broadband.

**Figure 20: Access to facilities**

Do you have easy access to...?	Easy Access	Difficult Access	No Access	Not Needed	Total
Electricity hook-up	8	0	9	8	25
Connectivity - reliable high-speed broadband	18	1	4	2	25
Rubbish disposal	16	8	0	1	25
Maintenance facilities - dry docks/wet docks for DIY maintenance	14	7	2	1	24
Maintenance facilities - dry docks/wet docks for paid for maintenance	15	7	1	2	25
Fresh water	17	7	0	1	25
Good quality local towpaths	18	7	0	0	25
Laundry facilities	16	5	1	3	25
Sewage disposal - pump out	17	5	1	2	25
Recycling	20	4	1	0	25
Supplies of coal, diesel and bottled gas	21	4	0	0	25
Bike storage	14	2	2	6	24
Sewage disposal - chemical toilet disposal	8	1	0	15	24
Car parking	15	1	0	8	24
Fuel and other necessities storage	20	0	1	4	25

4.38 The majority saw no issues with licence or mooring enforcement, though 3 felt that action is taken too readily and 3 that enforcement is too lax.

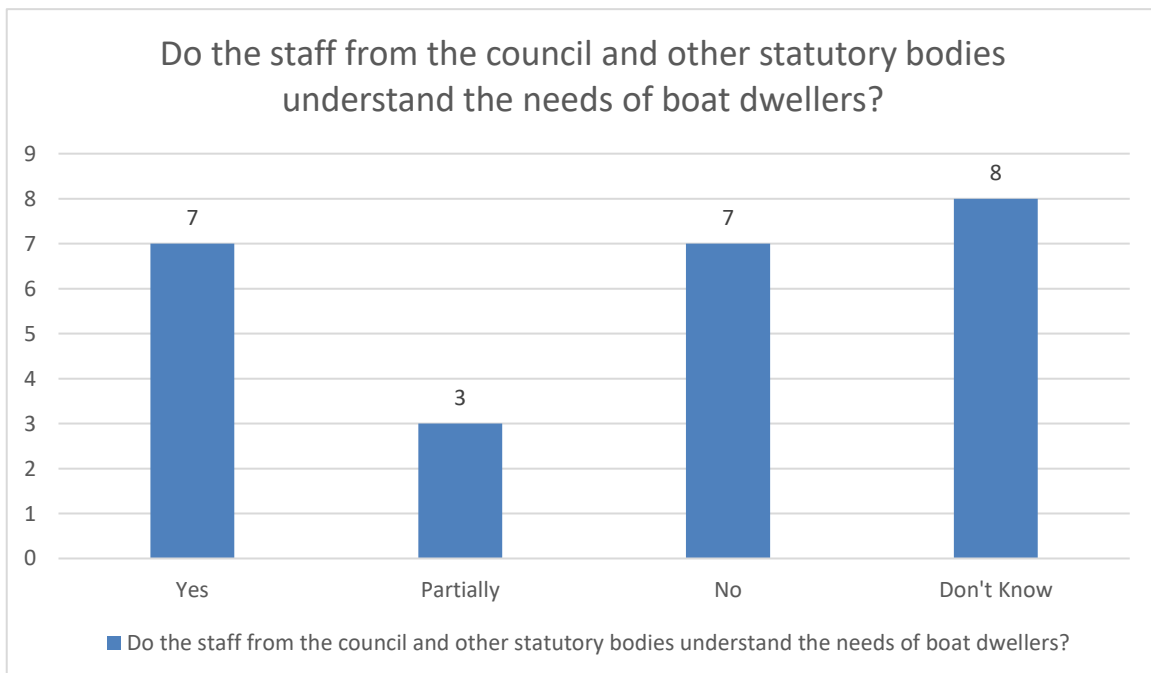
**Figure 21: Mooring and licence enforcement**



4.39 There were mixed views on whether officers from the Council and other statutory bodies understand the needs of boat dwellers; 10 said the staff understood or partially understood, while 7 said they did not understand.

4.40 When asked what would help increase statutory bodies’ staff understanding of boat dwellers needs, 3 interviewees suggested that training would help understanding and 2 that a statutory bodies and boat dwellers liaison group would be helpful (not shown on a chart).

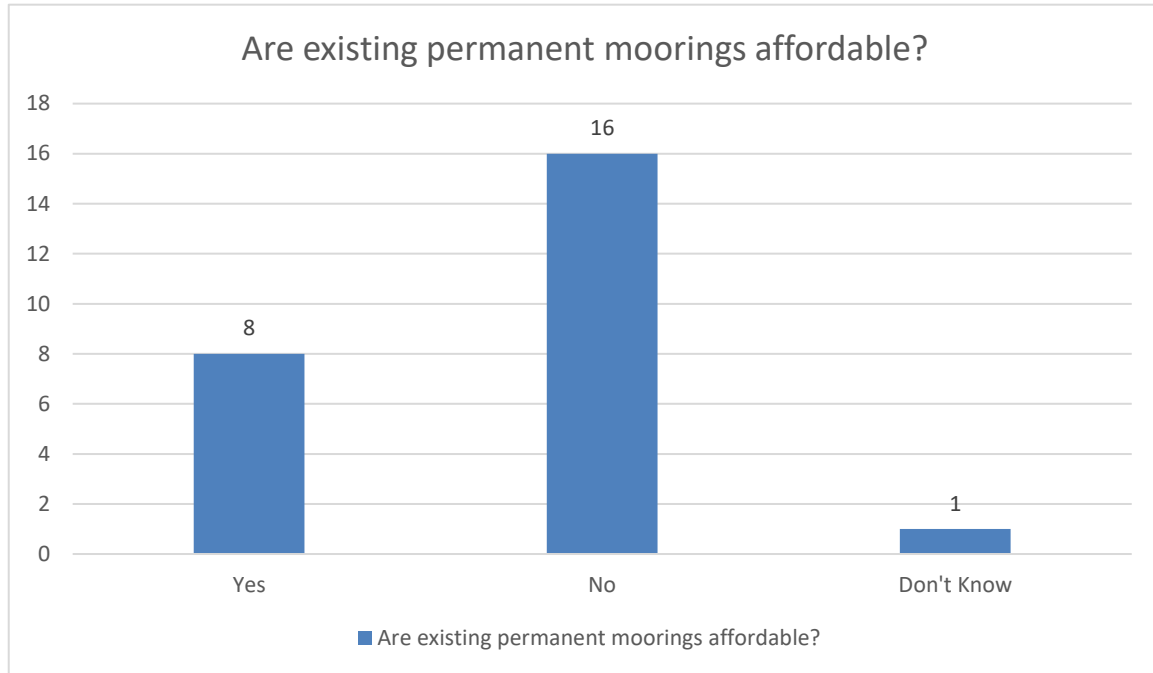
**Figure 22: Statutory bodies understanding of the needs of boat dwellers**



## Permanent Moorings

4.41 Two thirds of boat dwellers (16 out of 25; 64%) consider existing permanent moorings to be unaffordable, though another third consider them to be affordable. This result does not imply that moorings are unaffordable for all households and might best be viewed in a similar way to bricks and mortar housing costs; for example, housing costs are often defined as being unaffordable if they are above a certain percentage of a households income then the housing costs are unaffordable for that household.

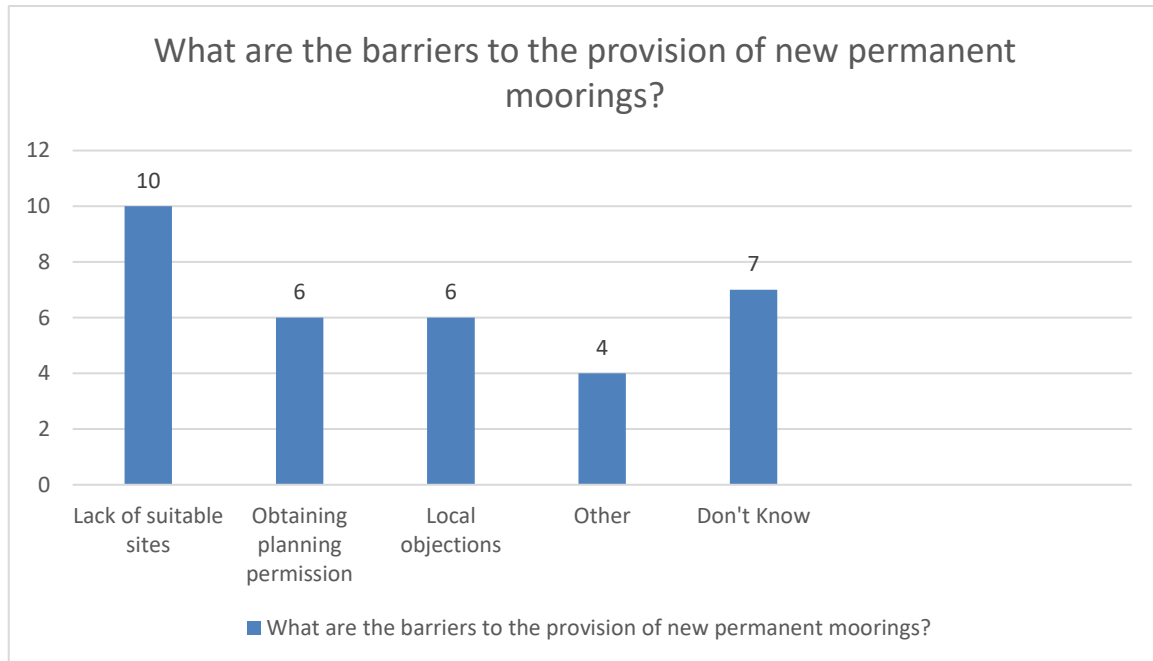
**Figure 23: Affordability of permanent moorings**





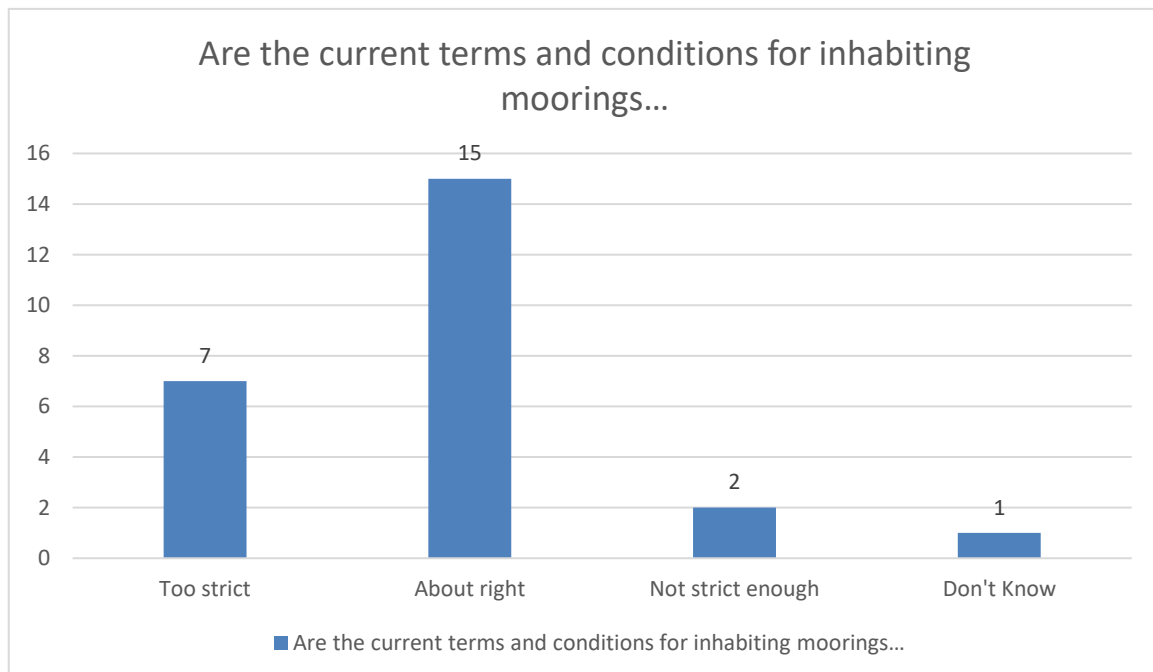
4.42 The main barriers to providing new permanent moorings are lack of suitable sites, obtaining planning permission and local objections (presumably often through the planning system). Four boat dwellers ticked all the barriers listed in this question. ‘Other’ reasons were ‘too expensive’ (3 respondents) and ‘too many people living on boats’ (1 respondent).

**Figure 24: Barrier to providing permanent moorings (total number is 33, not 25, as 4 boat dwellers ticked all the barriers listed in the question)**



4.43 Approaching two thirds (15; 60%) consider the current terms and conditions for inhabited moorings to be about right, though 7 consider them to be too strict and 2 not strict enough.

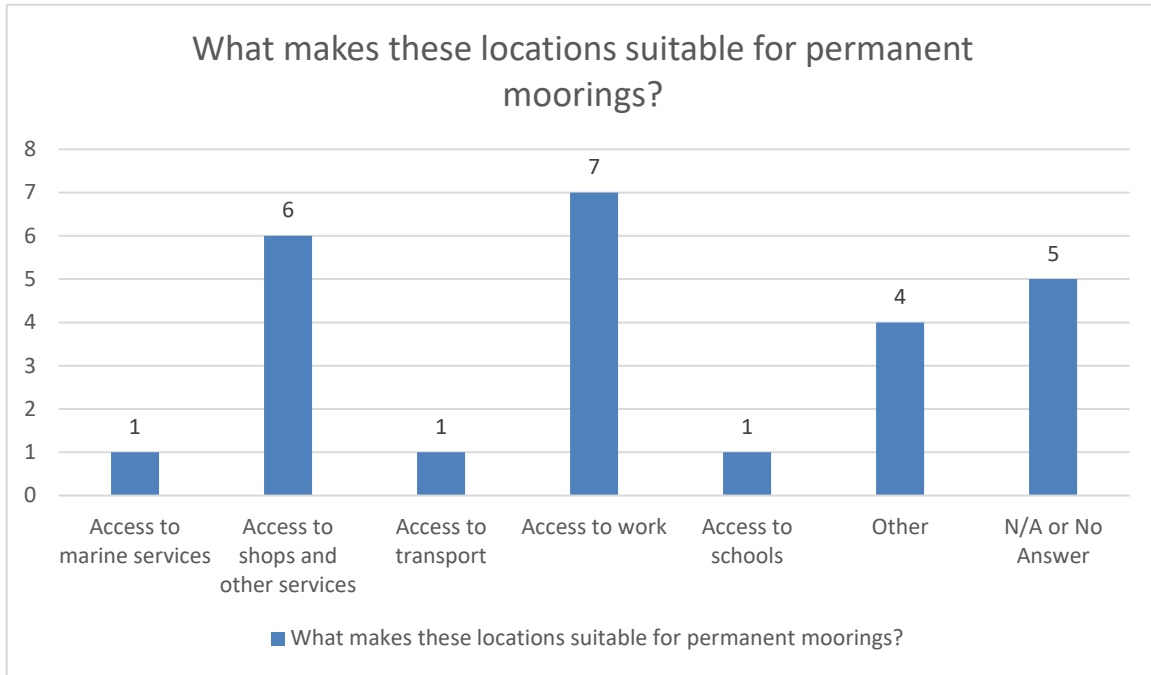
**Figure 25: Views on current conditions for inhabited moorings**



4.44 When asked about their preferred locations for permanent moorings, 11 said that where they are currently is their preferred location. Two preferred wild areas. Others suggested Hampton, Thames Ditton, Kingston, Walton or ‘closer to central London (one each). One simply suggested ‘close to work’.

4.45 The main things that made a location suitable for permanent moorings are access to work and access to shops and other services.

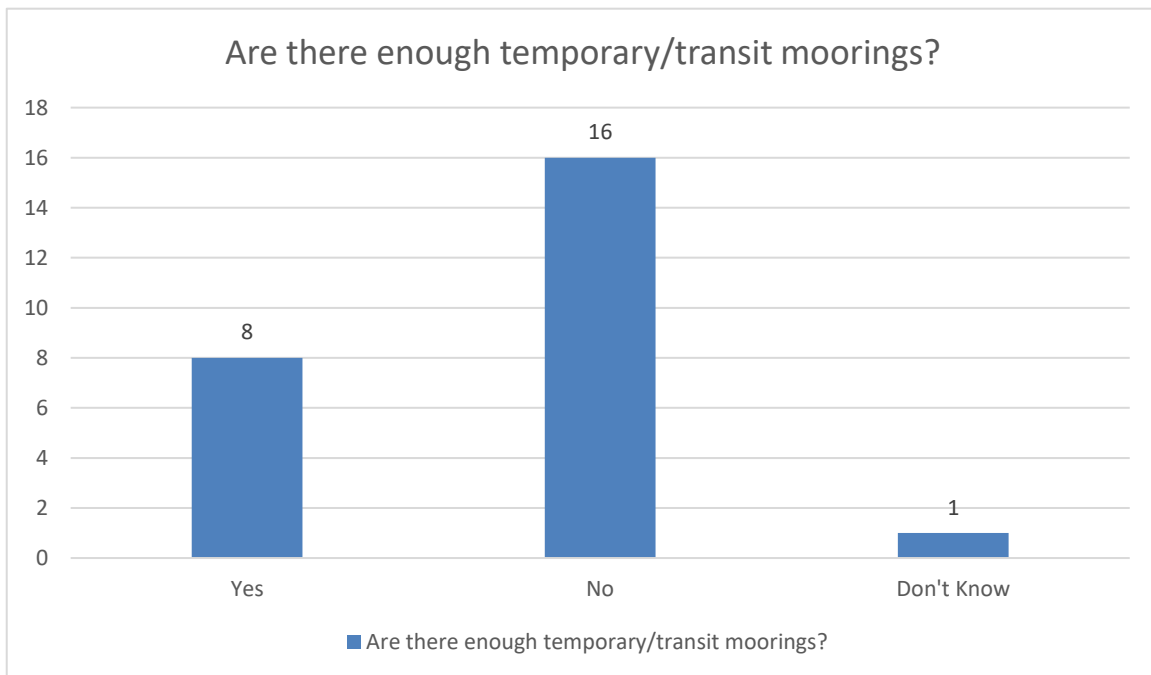
**Figure 26: What makes a location suitable for permanent moorings**



### Temporary moorings

4.46 Two thirds of the boat dwellers (16 out of 25; 64%) consider that there are not enough temporary moorings, though another 8 say that there are enough. A shortage of temporary mooring is likely to affect leisure tourist boats who may need to moor overnight on unsuitable moorings or pass through Elmbridge to moor elsewhere, thereby not contributing to the local economy of the River.

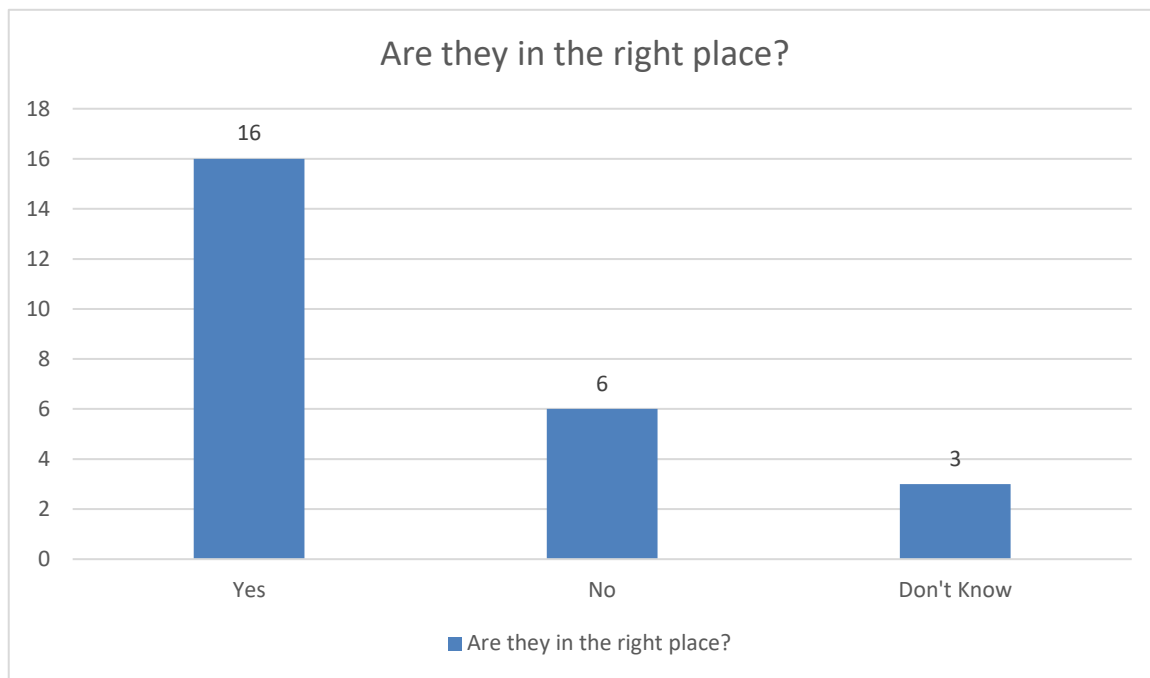
**Figure 27: Are there enough temporary moorings**



4.47 While a majority think that there are not enough temporary moorings, a two-thirds majority (16 out of 25)

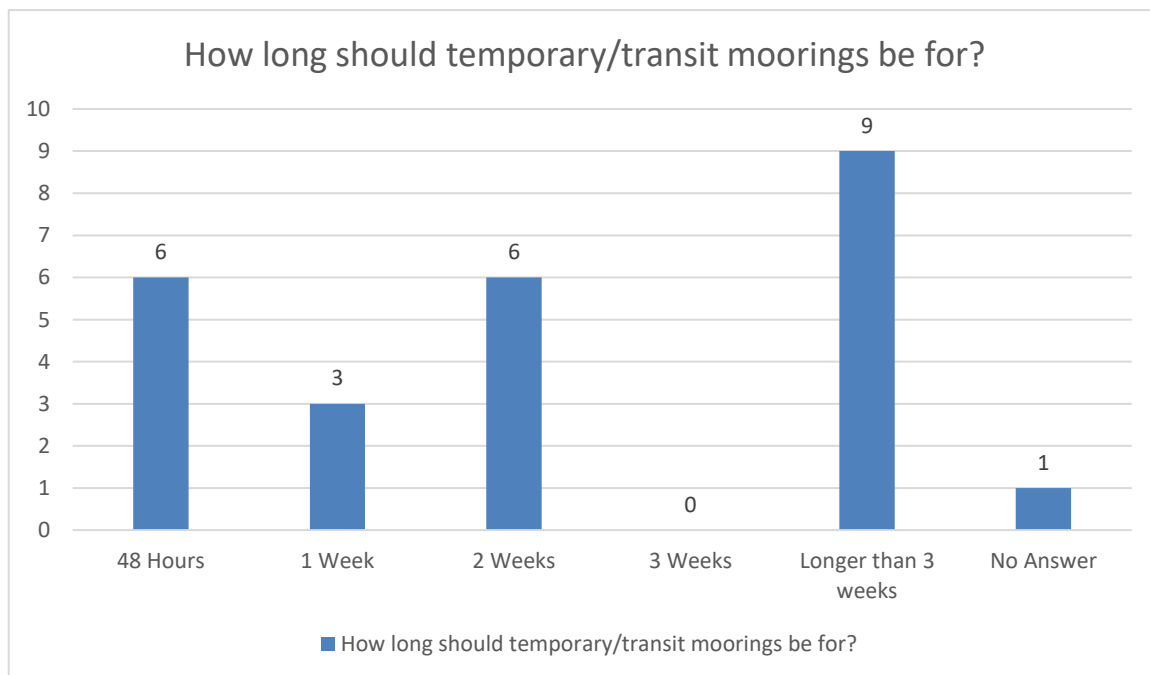
consider those that exist to be in the right place. There were no specific suggestions as to where to place new temporary moorings.

**Figure 28: Are temporary moorings in the right place?**



4.48 There was little consensus about how long a temporary mooring should be for. Just over a third (9; 36%) want temporary moorings to be for longer than 3 weeks, but a quarter (6; 24%) said 2 weeks and another quarter (6) said only 48 hours. The appropriate length of stay allowed may depend on where the temporary mooring is.

**Figure 29: Length of time a temporary mooring should be for**



## Relations with Other Local People

4.49 Three quarters of boat dwellers (19; 76%) reported having generally good relations with other local people. The other quarter reported that relations were mixed, depending on the person.

4.50 Comments about relations with other local people varied from the negative:

*“Some people hate boats with a passion”*

*“[There is a] Local pressure group called 'Reclaim our riverbanks”*

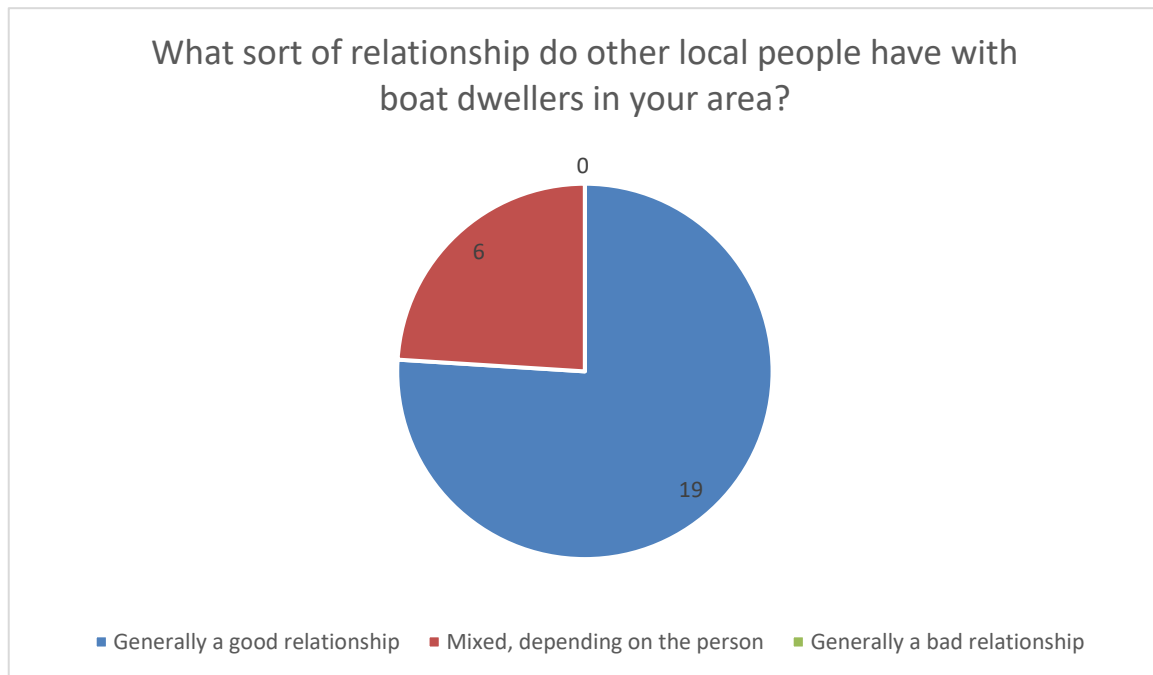
4.51 To the very positive:

*“No problem with local people”*

*“One lady allows a hose to her fresh water supply”*

*“Most people are lovely”*

**Figure 30: Relations with other local people**



## 5. Moorings Needs Assessment

### Introduction

- 5.1 This section focuses on the moorings that are needed in the study area currently and for the next five years. This time period is based on existing need; at this stage it is not possible to produce robust forecasts of the requirements for longer term future provision because of the uncertainties surrounding migration and new household formation. There are a number of reasons for this. Some examples are that it is difficult to predict how many households will decide to live on a boat as a lifestyle choice, how many will move to a boat because they are unable to afford bricks and mortar (rather than remaining living with parents, moving out of the area, or other options) among others. It shows the total provision licenced permanent moorings which is required in the area and discusses the need for any temporary moorings.
- 5.2 An appropriately simple modelling methodology is used for the BDAA based on the supply and demand of licenced permanent moorings. The benefits of simplicity are that the model is clear and transparent, along with uncertainty being reduced by keeping the number of assumptions to a minimum. The model is evidenced based.
- 5.3 The modelling process is as follows:
- » Take the number of licenced permanent moorings needed as expressed by boat dwellers in the survey.
  - » Take account of any increase in supply of licenced permanent moorings by moorings being released into the market. Two kinds of supply are considered. Firstly licenced moorings which become available because the owners move out of the area or move their boats out of the area. Secondly licenced moorings which become available because the owners stay in the area but no longer live on their boats and sell the boats. These are equivalent to ‘out-migration’ in demographic terms.
  - » Take account of any increase in demand which will arise in the next 5 years. Two kinds of demand are considered, which are broadly the same as standard demographic modelling but on a small scale. The first is ‘natural growth’; boat dwellers adult children likely to form new households who wish to continue their boat dwelling life. The second is ‘in-migration’; any increase in demand from new boat dwelling households moving into Elmbridge, or Elmbridge residents moving from other accommodation in the Borough to live on boats that are moored in the Borough. ‘Out-migration’ is covered on the demand side of the equation by owners moving their boats out of the area<sup>7</sup>.
  - » The resulting figure is the evidenced need for the next 5 years.
- 5.4 The model then takes a further step. Our best, very rough estimate is that there are up to 40 live aboard boats moored on the Thames through Elmbridge. This final step applies a multiplier to multiply up the need based on the robust evidence of the 25 boat dwellers surveyed to the potential 40 boat dwellers. This step is shown for completeness, but is not based on robust evidence and should be treated with caution.

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<sup>7</sup> Normally, the terms ‘in-migration’ and ‘out-migration’ would refer to persons or households moving into or out of Elmbridge Borough Council area. In this study those terms include to households moving on to or off the Thames running through Elmbridge and can include Elmbridge residents moving from other accommodation to boat dwelling without crossing the Borough boundary. We use the standard terms ‘in-migration’ and ‘out-migration’ because they cover households migrating into and out of Elmbridge, and also those migrating onto or off the River to other parts of Elmbridge.

## Licensed permanent moorings

5.5 The licensed permanent mooring needs assessment is shown in Figure 31.

**Figure 31: Licensed permanent mooring need**

Step	Number	Running total	Reference	Effect	Rational
(1) Expressed need for permanent mooring	10	10	Figure 17 and Figure 18	Base number without taking account of any additional supply or increase in the number of households	Boat dwellers on moorings at risk from eviction <u>and</u> who are looking for a licensed permanent mooring <i>in the area</i>
(2) Subtract the number of boat dwellers on licensed permanent moorings who intend to move their boat out of the area	-0 (zero)	10	Figure 19	Increases supply	It is assumed that the vacant mooring will be suitable for <i>at least one</i> of the boat dwellers in need of a permanent mooring
(3) Subtract the number of boat dwellers on licensed permanent moorings who intend to stay in the area but move off their boat and sell the boat	-0 (zero)	10	Figure 19	Increases supply	It is assumed that the vacant mooring will be suitable for <i>at least one</i> of the boat dwellers in need of a permanent mooring
(4) Add new households (natural growth)	+0 (zero)	10	Figure 9	Increases demand	New households formed by the adult children of boat dwellers. Based on the current household members ages, there is no evidence for any need for new households
(5) Add in-migration and growth from households moving to boat dwelling as a new form of accommodation	+0 (zero)	10	Figure 15	Increases demand	Current need from new boat dwellers is assumed to have been caught in those having lived on a boat for less than a year. It is not possible to estimate future growth.
(Alternative) Apply multiplier to gross up the number for 25 boats to the equivalent for 40 boats	x 1.6	16		Takes account of all boats, not only those interviewed	Our best estimate is that there are 40 live aboard boats in the area, but this number is subject to considerable uncertainty
<b>Total need for new moorings: evidence based actual number</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>Evidenced need</b>		
<b>Modelled need for number to account for 40 live aboard boats</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>Based on rough estimate of total number of boats</b>		<b>Included for completeness</b>

## The size of licensed permanent moorings required

- 1.1 An indication of the size of moorings required is shown in Figure 32. These numbers are based on Figure 3, Figure 17 and Figure 18.

**Figure 32: Size of licensed permanent moorings required (based on current boat length)**

Length of boat	Number
20-30ft	1
30-40ft	2
40-50ft	3
Over 50ft	3
Don't Know	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

## Licensed temporary and visiting moorings

- 5.6 Only one boat dweller expressed a need for a licensed temporary mooring (Figure 17 and Figure 18), but 16 boat dwellers interviewed said that there are not enough temporary moorings (Figure 27). Ideally additional temporary moorings should be provided in areas that are likely to attract visitors such as riverside pubs.

## 6. Conclusions

### The main findings

- 6.1 The survey shows a need for 10 licenced permanent moorings on the Thames through the Elmbridge Borough Council area. This is based on the stated need of boat dwellers moored on unlicensed and insecure permanent and temporary moorings.
- 6.2 The 10 licenced permanent moorings is the expressed need for 5 years from January 2022 based on interviewed boat dwellers plans for the next 5 years. It is not possible to produce a robust estimate of the need beyond 5 years.
- 6.3 A modelling exercise to ensure all important factors are taken into account did not lead to any change in the number of moorings required in Elmbridge BC. The modelling takes account of factors such as any existing licenced moorings becoming available and any need from 'natural growth' (new households being formed by the adult children of boat dwellers).
- 6.4 A very rough estimate suggests there may be up to 40 live aboard boats on the Thames through Elmbridge. If there are 40 then modelling suggest there may be a need for up to 16 licenced permanent moorings. However, it is impossible to identify live aboard boats with any precision unless the owners are present. Therefore, this conclusion should be treated with caution.
- 6.5 Some temporary/visiting moorings are required, but it is not clear how many and it would be prudent to take an incremental approach to providing these kinds of moorings. It is not possible to produce a robust estimate of how many are required because while boat dwellers stated a need for more temporary/visiting moorings, they could not give details of where or any indication of how many.
- 6.6 The survey shows a need for improved services, probably the most urgent are difficulty disposing of rubbish and difficulty accessing fresh water.



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