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26<sup>th</sup> July 2019

## **ELMBRIDGE UNAUTHORISED MOORING STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

Dear Ian

Thank you for inviting me to comment on the four possible solutions to the problem of unauthorised moorings in the borough, on behalf of local river users and friends of the river. I have sent a draft version of my comments below to all 294 subscribers on the RUG 8 email list and received a number of positive responses and no objections. I am confident that the comments below are representative of the river users community of two to three thousand members, representing watersports and recreation clubs and organisations on this very busy stretch of the River Thames.

Our views on the four options are presented below. I have also enclosed with this a copy of a paper on the history of ownership of the riverbank between Sunbury and Molesey which, I think, gets to the core of the problem of unauthorised moorings.

### **1. Managed Moorings**

Over 100 members at a lively RUG 8 meeting held on the 11th October 2018 voted overwhelmingly for this option. They voted for a resolution that the Environment Agency, Elmbridge Council and Surrey County Council should post 'no mooring signs' at regular intervals at all stretches of the Surrey riverbank from Sunbury to Molesey. They wanted these signs backed up with car parking style civil enforcement, with punitive daily charges imposed on vessels which ignore the notices. We note that Spelthorne Council and Historic Royal Palaces (Hampton Court Palace) have successfully introduced such schemes to manage moorings on their own land.

We fully support Elmbridge's proposal for managed moorings on their land downstream of Hampton Court Bridge. However we want to see this solution extended upstream to the whole stretch of the river within Elmbridge's borders. **We do not accept that the 'complex' pattern of land ownership above the bridge makes this difficult.**

In October 2018, we were not fully aware of the fact that the Environment Agency (EA) had failed to register ownership of the riverbank when they inherited it from the National Rivers Authority in 1996, nor were we aware that the EA intended to pursue a claim of adverse possession against the residents in Cherry Orchard Gardens who have been maintaining the riverside

area behind their properties for decades without any complaints that we are aware of.

RUG 8's position has evolved and we now want the EA to compromise with the Cherry Orchard Garden residents to take that issue off the table, and then focus on taking their claim for adverse possession for the river bank upstream to Sunbury Lock. **Once the land registration issue is resolved by the Land Registry, we want Elmbridge BC, Surrey CC and the EA to work together on a jointly managed moorings solution.** Alternatively, we would support a suggestion made in email correspondence with EBC councillors by a local residents' group that **the Council should seek to gain ownership of the riverbank by gifting from the EA and Surrey CC.**

Once ownership is settled, we want the natural riverbank to be restored as much as possible, with the exception of the former Chelsea and Lambeth Waterworks wharves. We would like to see these wharves developed as 24-hour visitor moorings.

## **2. Byelaws**

This would be a good solution, but first Elmbridge would need to gain ownership of the riverbank (see option 1 above)

## **3. Public Service Protection Order**

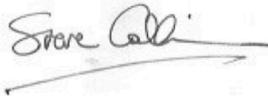
RUG 8 members have no objection to this option.

## **4. Do nothing**

This option would not be acceptable to RUG 8 members!

Thank you

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Collins". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line that extends to the right.

Steve Collins  
Chairman, Thames River Users Group 8