

Threat not just to boaters

Canal operators have been required to apply fo water abstraction licences since 2017, prior to that being permitted to borrow whatever was needed to run canals CRT has had to submit some 150 licence applications each taking about half a day to prepare with no certainty of acceptance. One of the most seriously threatened the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal which could lose up to 90% of its supply, to be restored at exorbitan cost at a time when already reeling from slashing o its Government grant. The result is likely to be closing down of the canal during the height of the touris season with knock on effects for tourist businesses, boa hire, accommodation and a cascade of damage to loca services which rely on income from tourists. Reduced water in the canal will adversely affect wildlife, fish and the structural integrity of this canal, which already suffer from breaches as a result of the difficult geology. An appeal by CRT has already been lost, to the delight o Afonydd Cymru, whose sole interest seems to be having plenty of water in the River Usk, from which the cana is supplied at Brecon, to support the declining number of salmon which anglers want to catch. Although use of locks is a prime requirement for canal water, even canoeists who portage will have problems. An online petition to the Welsh Government needed to collec-10,000 signatures to initiate a debate. It reached 13,000 before Easter so a debate should now go ahead. The problem could be avoided by refunding the charge when the water is returned to the river.

Access questions increasing

Our MP until the General Election, James Gray (Con), wanted to see a reduction in the number of public footpaths, including objection to aspects of the English coastal path, and did not want to see improvement in the river access situation. He was on record as saying that Martin Salter, the MP most vehemently opposed to canoeing, was welcome in the constituency.

Like so many others, Gray was ousted at the General Election and was replaced by Dr Roz Savage (LD), whose major claim to fame has been rowing solo across



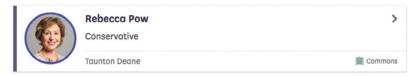
The UK and Welsh Governments have set up a £1,000,000 fund to investigate why the Wye is getting dirtier and wildlife declining. Farmers, environmental groups and citizen scientists will play a part in evidence gathering. Although there is no mention of recreational use of the river, a Welsh Government news release is headed by a picture including what could be a canoe on the river.

	A sheet here		Asked as 45 hose 201
Q	Asked by	Gareth Thomas (Harrow West)	Asked on: 15 June 20
	tment for	Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	C 593
To ask	the Secretar	ry of State for Environment , Food and Rural Affairs, d from any Common Law rights to navigate freely th	
v A	Answered	by: Rebecca Pow	Answered on: 23 June 20
	sh that they	avigate inland rivers for recreational purposes where have a legal right to do so, either through voluntary	
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□ Q	Asked by	Gareth Thomas (Harrow West)	Asked on: 29 June 202
		Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	C 6590
	Boats the Secretar	y of State for Environment , Food and Rural Affairs,	pursuant to the Answer of 23 June
To ask 2020 to law righ	the Secretar Question 5 Ints to naviga	9339, whether there is not a statute or other legal re ite freely the inland rivers of England and Wales.	estriction which inhibits the common
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To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the guidance for riparian owners published by the Environment Agency entitled Living on the Edge, what the legal basis is for the statement in that guide that there is no public right of navigation on most non-tidal watercourses.

▲ <u>Hide full question</u>

Answer



Answered on

2 March 2021

The legal position is complex. It is the Government's view that those seeking to navigate inland rivers for recreational purposes where there is no navigation authority should establish that they have a legal right to do so, either through voluntary agreement with riparian landowners or otherwise.

the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans. Her attitude to small boats is very different from his.

In the past we have had to go outside the constituency to put questions, policy not approved, and have received assistance from Gareth Thomas (Lab) and Michael Fabricant (Con), in particular, to get Parliamentary questions put and have been aware of Caroline Lucas Some answers to questions put for us in the past. Compare the wording with the words offered by the current Government on the following pages.