

# Navigation Committee

13 April 2023

Agenda item number 11

## Safety on the Broads- update

Report by the Director of Operations

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### Purpose

To update the Navigation Committee on the recent improvements, changes and additions to the safety management of the Broads' waterways and how these measures are bringing improvements for our users.

### Broads Plan context

C4 Maintain and improve safety and security standards and user behaviour on the waterways

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Safety has always been a strategic priority for the Broads Authority. The organisation is a competent Harbour Authority, operating under the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC). We maintain a dedicated Safety Management System (SMS) and both the PMSC and SMS systems are independently audited basis regularly to ensure compliance.
- 1.2. We are also a licensing authority, utilising powers under the Broads Authority Act 2009 and the Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907, relating to vessels let for hire, and we collate and review safety incidents on our waters and review these through the Boat Safety Management Group (BSMG).
- 1.3. The Chair of the Navigation Committee is appointed as the Lead Member for Safety and they have direct access to the Head of Safety Management. They also chair the Boat Safety Management Group on behalf of the Authority. Safety is a standing item on the Broads Authority meeting agenda and the Authority operates an internal Safety Committee, to allow a review of incidents and accidents, and to bring changes where needed. The Safety Committee has representatives from each directorate and a Management Team representative to ensure full compliance across all areas of the Authority's work.

## 2. Incident Reviews

- 2.1. After the British Government relaxed national lockdown restrictions (4 July 2020) outdoor activities significantly increased across the UK and the Broads' waterways became a popular choice for many families who were still unable to access foreign holidays.

- 2.2. This popularity saw an increase in first-time pleasure boat hirers, increased day-boat hires and a huge rise in entry-level water sports like stand-up paddle-boarding, canoeing and kayaking. This surge of users to our waterways also saw an increase in reported waterway incidents and tragically an increase in boat-related fatalities. (*Fatality involving the Diamond Emblem 1, August 2020, and fatality on the River Bure September 2020*).

### 3. Actions

- 3.1. At the March 2022 Broads Authority, a paper "[Safety on the Broads](#)" was presented providing an update on safety actions to date, and these included:
- Increased Ranger staff and patrols between April & November maintaining a 7-day launch presence on the network to encourage safety. The additional patrolling days started in the 2020/21 season.<sup>1</sup>
  - Increased the Hire Boat Licensing Officer time from 1 day a week to 3 days to allow for more auditing, investigation and licensing compliance checks. Effective from December 2021.
  - Delivered a suite of free online instructional videos, developed in conjunction with the Broads Hire Boat Federation, RNLI, Maritime Coastguard Agency, and the British Canoeing to provide free safety advice and instruction. These free videos have been viewed thousands of times and are available via this link [Broads Authority - YouTube](#)
  - Increased the number of 'Super Safety Events' where random spot checks are conducted for vessels on our waters. These multi-agency events help educate and inform boaters on a variety of safety issues from boat handling, and speed as well as looking for vessel defects, non-wearing of buoyancy aids and hazardous boat issues.
  - Developed closer ties with third-party organisations relating to hiring boats and safety, with regular meetings with Broads Hire Boat Federation, RYA, British Marine, and the Norfolk & Suffolk Boating Association, as well as Broadbeat, the Coastguard and the Drowning Prevention Forums.
- 3.2. The March 2022 report also made further recommendations to fully adopt the Code for the Design, Construction and Operation of Hire Boats (Hire Boat Code) in full and to adopt the Quality Accredited Boatyard Scheme (the QAB, administered by British Marine) into the Broads Authority Hire Boat Licensing Conditions from 1 April 2023<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> 2023/24 agreed navigation charges allow for the additional seasonal Rangers and the Senior Compliance Ranger posts to continue

<sup>2</sup> The addition of the QAB to Hire Boat Licensing was a recommendation made to the Broads Authority by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) upon the conclusion of their investigation in Diamond Emblem 1. Section 5 [MAIBInvReport 5/2022 - Diamond Emblem 1 - Very Serious Marine Casualty \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

## 4. Further Actions

- 4.1. As part of the Broads Authority's continuous improvements to the health and safety of our waterway users we have also introduced:
- A new licensing requirement for all operators letting for hire non-powered craft ([Broads Authority December 2022](#))
  - Introduction of a Hire Boat Questionnaire (2021/22), conducted by Rangers on randomly selected Hirers to gauge key aspects of their hire experience from hand-over to their confidence at the helm.

## 5. Hire Boat Questionnaire Results 2021/2022

- 5.1. During the 2021/22 season Rangers were tasked to undertake the Hire Boat Questionnaire at Super Safety Events and at other random times when an opportunity existed. The purpose of the questions is to gauge key aspects from the helm of the hire craft, such as how often they hire vessels, whether have they seen the safety videos, did they get a handover, what was the duration of the handover and how confident do they feel to helm the vessel.
- 5.2. During **2021/22** 724 questionnaires were completed. The questionnaire will be utilised again during the 2023/24 season.
- 5.3. The full results are in the appendices. Highlights to report are:
- 30% who participated were first-time hirers, and 27% questioned had over 6 previous hiring experiences.
  - 74% had viewed the online safety videos, with 64% having watched the videos before collecting their hired vessel.
  - 88% had received a copy of the Broadcaster and were signposted to the pages relating to safety on the Broads.
  - The handover duration lasted between 20-30 minutes for 40%, with 20% receiving a handover of between 30 and 45 minutes.
  - 12% reported that they did not receive an in-water trial of their vessel <sup>3</sup>
  - During hand-over, good percentages were recorded against key aspects of boat handling, for example, judging speed, passing under low bridges, person overboard procedures, use of life jackets and mooring against the tide and stern on.

## 6. Conclusion

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<sup>3</sup> Under the new Hire Boat Code even experienced helms will have to demonstrate competence during a compulsory in-water trial.

- 6.1. Health and safety improvements on our waters cannot be proven by a recognisable metric or statistics, so making direct comparisons to the raft of improved safety measures and online instructional material brought into our safety management systems and incident rates cannot be made.
- 6.2. We have not seen a repeat of the tragic fatalities experienced in 2020; we know the reassurance provided to waterway users by a Ranger on patrol and the added engagement via safety events, improving licensing requirements and better processes by Hire Operators at hand-over has on boat user's knowledge and confidence.
- 6.3. Through our incident logs we know the commonest reported incidents continues to be slips, trips and falls; these incidents are significantly higher when mooring or disembarking a mooring, and we still observe a high number of people on the water without personal floatation devices. Work to mitigate and reduce these incidents continues. The gentle waterways of the Broads are a safe and enjoyable environment for users. The Broads Authority, in conjunction with key partners, is proactive in finding mitigations to safety issues and we continue to monitor, review and adapt when incidents occur.

Author: Rob Rogers

Date of report: 08 March 2023

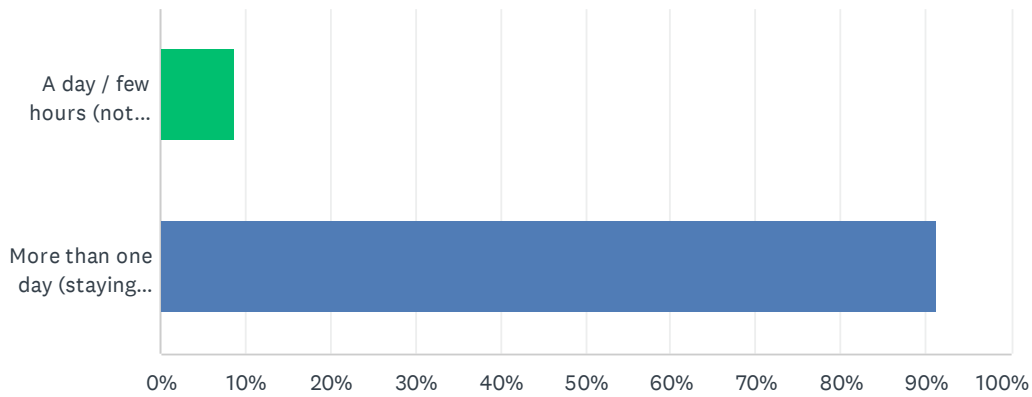
Background papers: links provided within the report

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: **C4 - Maintain and improve safety and security standards and user behaviour on the waterways**

Appendix 1 – Broads Boat Hirers Survey 2022

## Q1 Are you hiring a boat for:

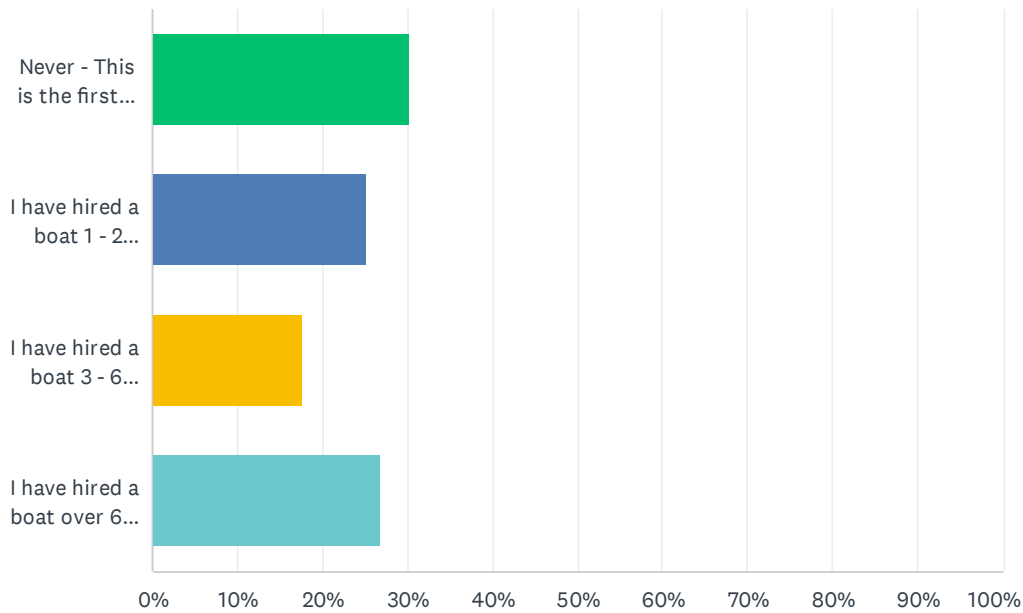
Answered: 721 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A day / few hours (not staying in the boat overnight)	8.74%	63
More than one day (staying overnight in the boat)	91.26%	658
TOTAL		721

## Q2 How often have you hired a boat on the Broads before this occasion

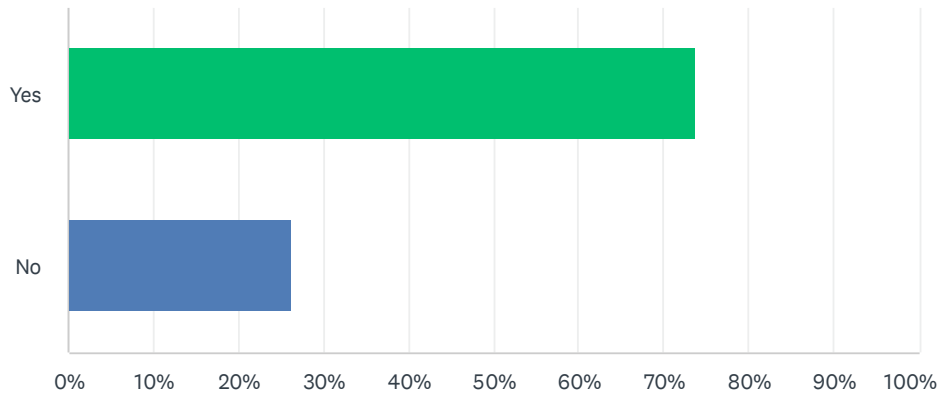
Answered: 722 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Never - This is the first time I have hired a boat on the Broads	30.33%	219
I have hired a boat 1 - 2 times before	25.07%	181
I have hired a boat 3 - 6 times before	17.73%	128
I have hired a boat over 6 times before	26.87%	194
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>722</b>

### Q3 Did your boat hirer recommend viewing the Broads Authority animated safety videos?

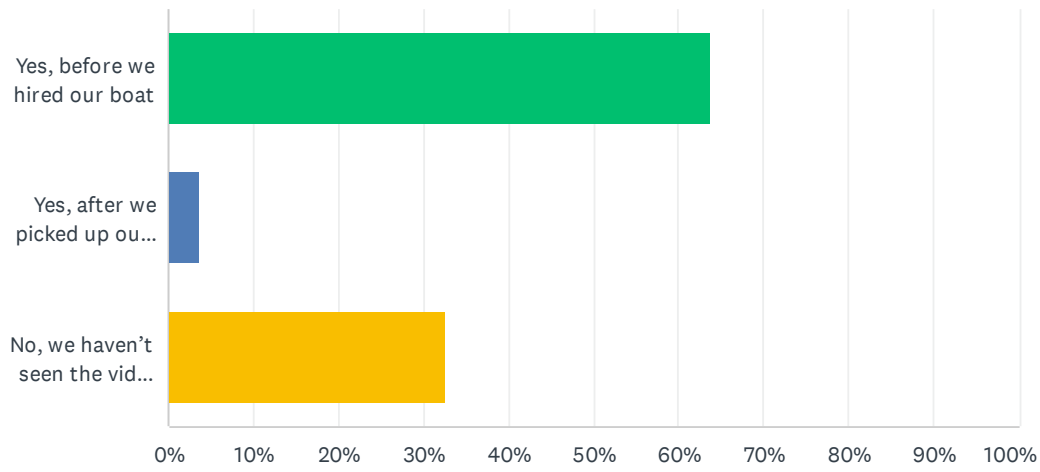
Answered: 721 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	73.79%	532
No	26.21%	189
TOTAL		721

## Q4 Have you watched the Broads Authority animated safety videos?

Answered: 723 Skipped: 7

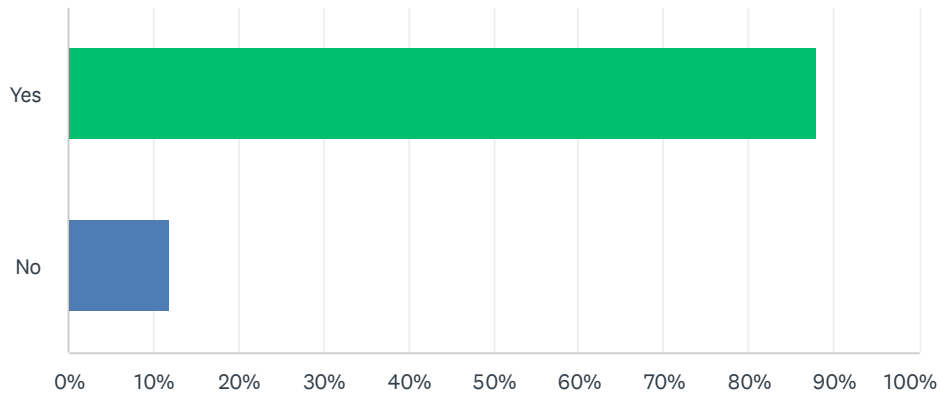


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, before we hired our boat	63.76%	461
Yes, after we picked up our boat	3.60%	26
No, we haven't seen the videos yet	32.64%	236
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>723</b>



## Q5 Did your boat hirer provide you with a copy of Broadcaster and point out the safety information it contains?

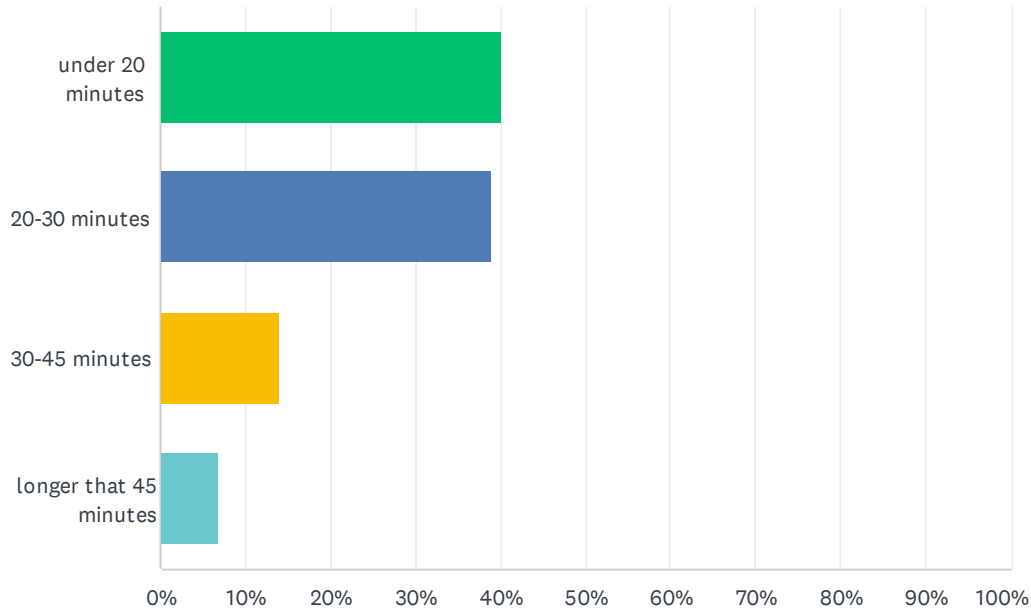
Answered: 721 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.07%	635
No	11.93%	86
TOTAL		721

### Q6 On your boat handover with your hirer, how long approximately did you spend onboard being shown how to operate the various onboard systems, not including the trial run?

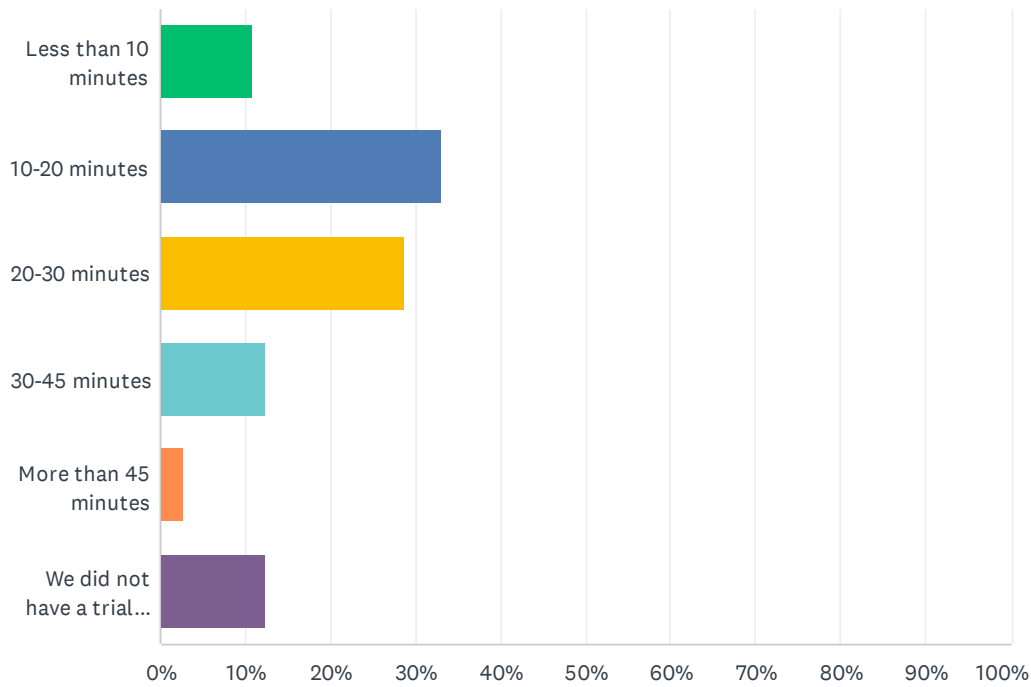
Answered: 722 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
under 20 minutes	40.17% 290
20-30 minutes	38.92% 281
30-45 minutes	14.13% 102
longer that 45 minutes	6.79% 49
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>722</b>

## Q7 How long approximately did your trial run/show out last?

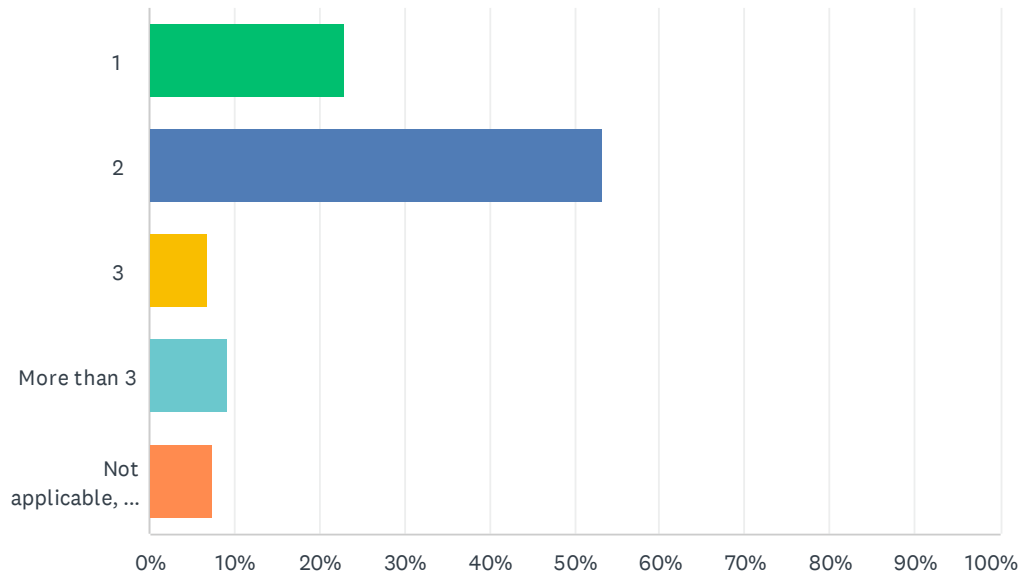
Answered: 722 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 10 minutes	10.80%	78
10-20 minutes	32.96%	238
20-30 minutes	28.81%	208
30-45 minutes	12.33%	89
More than 45 minutes	2.77%	20
We did not have a trial run (for example because you were experienced boaters or were only hiring a dayboat)	12.33%	89
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>722</b>

## Q8 How many of your group were actively involved in the trial run/show out demonstration?

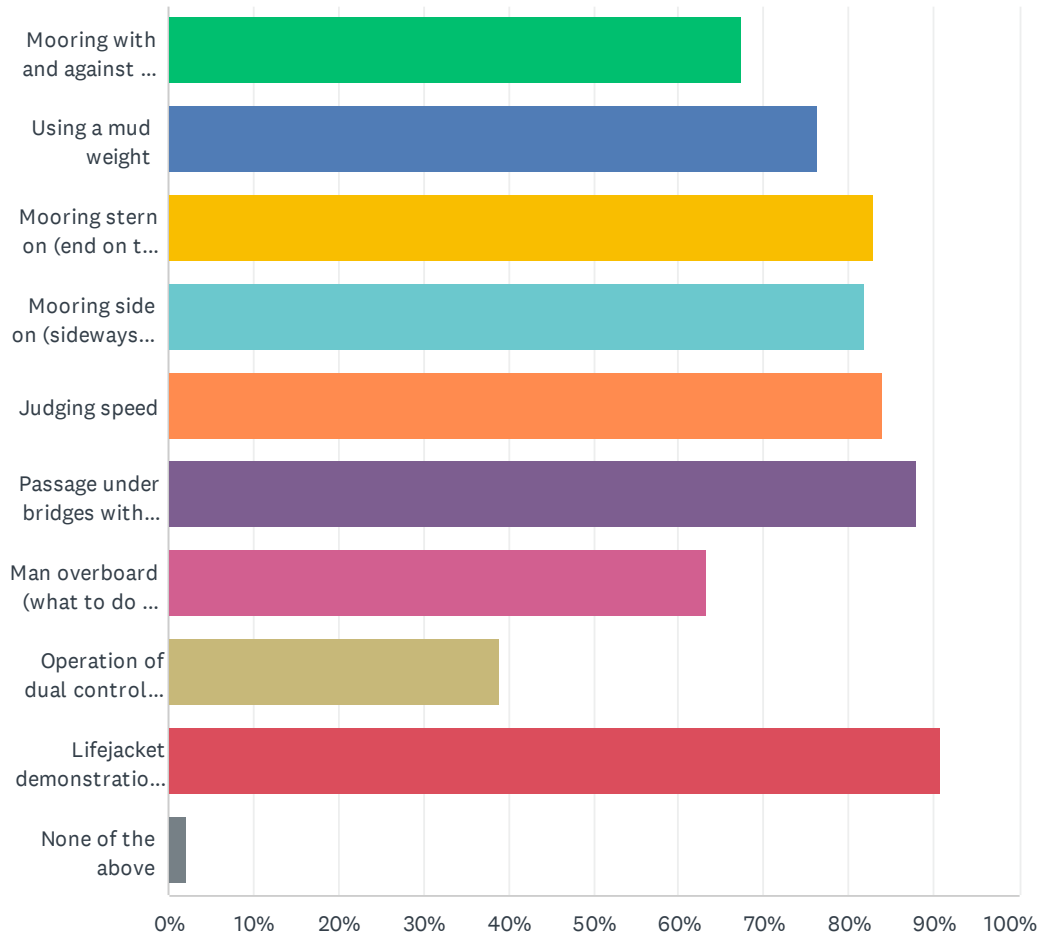
Answered: 722 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	23.13%	167
2	53.32%	385
3	6.93%	50
More than 3	9.14%	66
Not applicable, we did not have a trial run	7.48%	54
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>722</b>

### Q9 Thinking about your handover / trial run, did the yard staff member explain clearly how to control the boat in the following circumstances? (please tick all those that apply)

Answered: 724 Skipped: 6

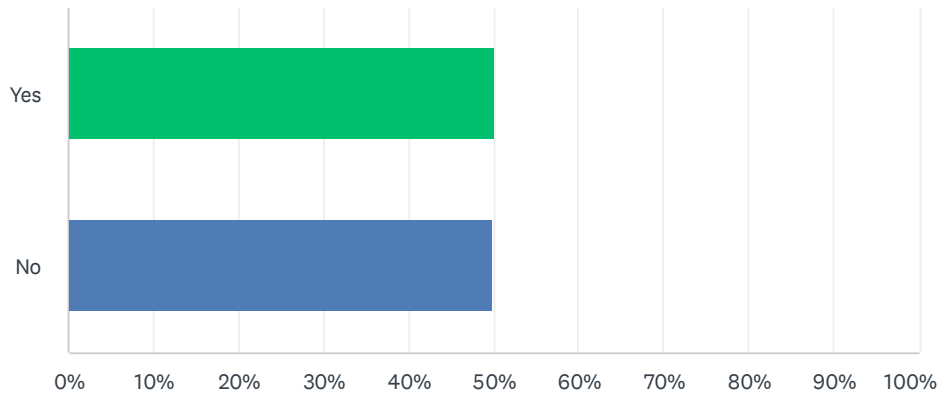


## Broads Hirers Survey 2022 (Ranger Version)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Mooring with and against the tide.	67.40%	488
Using a mud weight	76.38%	553
Mooring stern on (end on to the mooring)	82.87%	600
Mooring side on (sideways to the mooring)	81.91%	593
Judging speed	83.98%	608
Passage under bridges with particular reference to air draft (the space needed for your boat to pass under a bridge safely)	87.98%	637
Man overboard (what to do if someone falls into the water)	63.26%	458
Operation of dual control and method of switching	39.09%	283
Lifejacket demonstration – how to fit it correctly and when to wear it	90.88%	658
None of the above	2.21%	16
Total Respondents: 724		

## Q10 Did the yard staff discuss the dangers of boating with alcohol consumption with you?

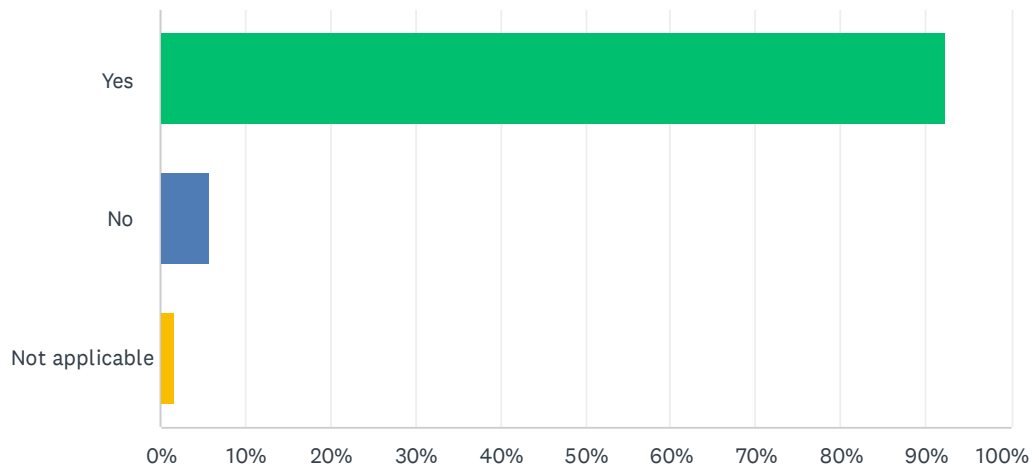
Answered: 723 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	50.07%	362
No	49.93%	361
TOTAL		723

## Q11 On completion of the trial run did you sign anything to say you were satisfied with your ability to handle the boat?

Answered: 722 Skipped: 8

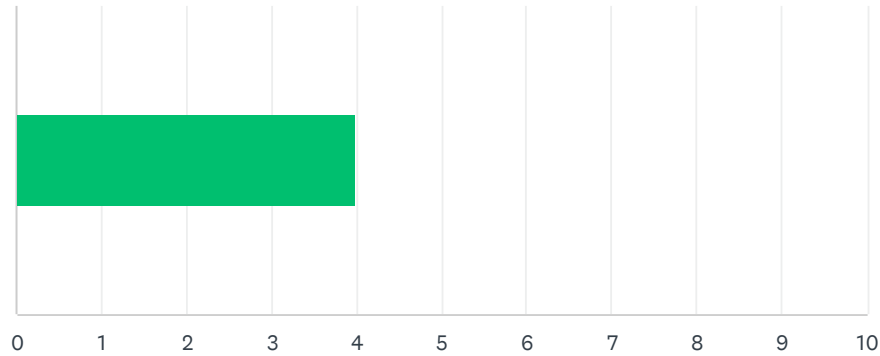


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	92.38%	667
No	5.82%	42
Not applicable	1.80%	13
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>722</b>



## Q12 How confident did you feel operating the boat when you first left the boatyard? 1 is not confident at all and 5 is very confident

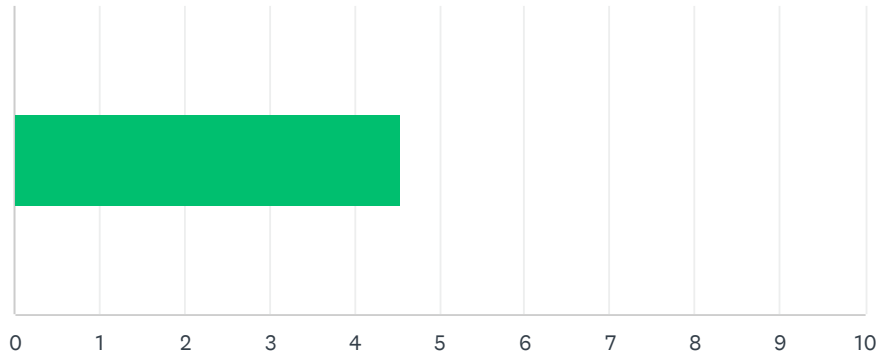
Answered: 691 Skipped: 39



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	4	2,755	691
Total Respondents: 691			

### Q13 How confident do you feel operating the boat now? 1 is not confident at all and 5 is very confident

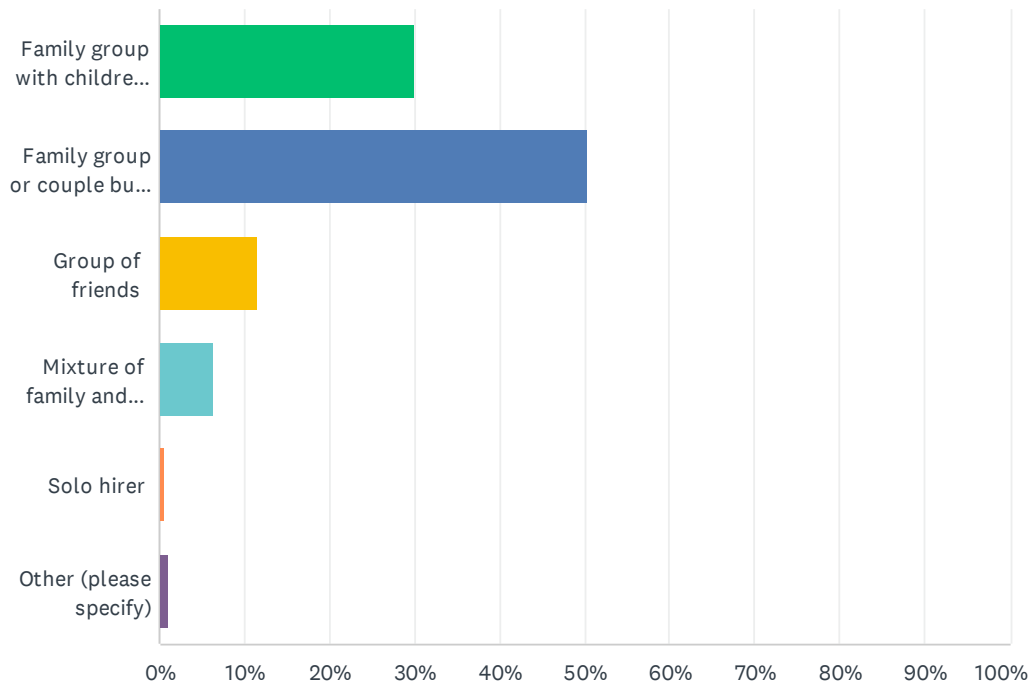
Answered: 720 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	5	3,265	720
Total Respondents: 720			

## Q15 Which best describes your group?

Answered: 724 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Family group with children under 16 years old	29.97%	217
Family group or couple but no children under 16 years old	50.41%	365
Group of friends	11.46%	83
Mixture of family and friends	6.49%	47
Solo hirer	0.69%	5
Other (please specify)	0.97%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>724</b>