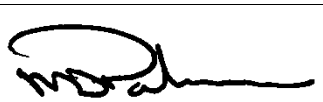
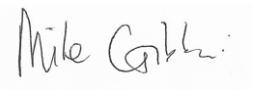
WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

PATRON: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
Restoring 70 miles of canal and towpath
for the benefit of local communities, wildlife and leisure

Document Details	
Document Number	10.09.xxx
Document Title	Lifejacket Policy
Internal Revision	1.1
Document Status	Approved

Document Review and Approval			
	Name and Position	**Signature**	**Date**
Prepared By	M Palmer - Head of Boats		**9 July 2024**
Checked By	M Gibbin - CEO		**9 July 2024**
	L Davis - H&S Trustee		**9 July 2024**
Approved By	M Holliss - Chair of Trustees		**9 July 2024**

Revision History		
Rev.	**Amendment**	**Date**
1.0	First Draft	11 June 2024
1.1	Second Draft (incorporating further consultation feedback), reviewed and approved	9 July 2024

This Life Jacket Policy and its Procedures have been drafted following significant consultation, both amongst WBCT volunteers (in particular within the Boat and Health & Safety Teams) and after assessing policy at several external organisations including CRT, the IWA, the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust, the Cotswold Canals Trust and the Basingstoke Canal. A high degree of alignment was found with the detail of this policy.

	Wilts & Berks Canal Trust	Document No.: 10.09.xxx
	Lifejacket policy	9 July 2024

Policy

The Trust will take appropriate measures to safeguard the Health & Safety of volunteers when working on Trust boats and when working on/near water. These measures will significantly reduce the risk of drowning or lesser harm from falling into the water (e.g. from the helm, when stepping onto or off the bow, from a lock or from the canal bank).

Since all boat passengers are briefed and required to remain inside the profile of Trust boats at all times, lifejackets are not required for passengers on the Trust's 'enclosed' trip boats. For the Trust's 'open' boats, buoyancy aids are recommended for children and must be provided. A lifejacket or buoyancy aid should be made available to any passenger who wishes to wear one.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Procedures

1. Trip Boats
('Enclosed': Dragonfly & Nonsuch; 'Open': The Mary Archard and Damselfly)

a. Wearing of lifejackets (Type: ISO 12402-3 Automatic Inflation) is **mandatory** for skippers and **one** bow crew member working primarily outside the cabin (even if occasionally inside).

b. On 'enclosed' boats, additional cabin crew members (working inside the cabin) need **not** wear lifejackets.

c. On 'open' boats, wearing life jackets is **mandatory** for skippers and **all** crew. Buoyancy aids are **recommended** for all children travelling as passengers on 'open' boats.

d. There is **no requirement** for buoyancy aids for any passengers on 'enclosed' boats.

e. When operating a lock, all lock crew must wear a lifejacket.

2. Working On, Near or In Water including Workboats
(*Nelson*, *Boswell, butties and land-based volunteers*)

a. Wearing of lifejackets (Type: ISO 12402-3 Automatic Inflation) or buoyancy aids (non-inflating flotation devices) is **mandatory** for all Trust skippers/crew on workboats and butties.

b. Lifejackets should be substituted by buoyancy aids and/or attached lifelines for anyone working in the canal, when immersion is possible or when accidental inflation could happen (for example reed pulling). The relevant RAMS should be consulted and followed.

c. When working near or beside the canal, lifejackets or buoyancy aids may be required, depending on the activity (e.g. when mowing or working on the canal side of the towpath). The relevant RAMS should be consulted and followed.

3. Servicing & Maintenance

a. All life jackets must be within their servicing period.

a. The skipper should verify that **all** lifejackets are serviceable before **any** are used on a trip.

b. Any defective lifejacket must be reported by the skipper on the boat's Trip Log, and the defective lifejacket must not be used until it has been repaired.

c. All lifejackets are to be serviced and certified annually in line with manufacturer recommendations. An indicative list of UK Approved Service Stations, and the products they may service, is available

d. online at the www.gov.uk website and is titled "Approved Service Stations for Liferafts, Boats, and Lifejackets".