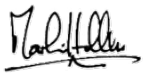
Wilts & Berks Canal Trust

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

Restoring 70 miles of canal and towpath for the benefit of local communities, wildlife and leisure

Document Details	
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Document Review and Approval			
	Name and Position	**Signature**	**Date**
Prepared By	Martin Holliss, Chair Max Crofts, Land Team		9 Nov 2026
Checked By	Martin Holliss, Chair Policy Working Group		9 Nov 2026
Approved By	Martin Holliss, Chair		9 Nov 2026

Revision History			
Rev.	**Amendment**	**prepared by**	**Date**
1.0	Initial Version	George Eycott	14 May 2015
2.0	Risk-based (not binary) decision making Clear Trustee oversight triggers Alignment with delegated authority levels Simplified and more usable project checklist Stronger emphasis on investment protection and accountability	Max Crofts	9 Nov 2026

	Wilts & Berks Canal Trust	rev 2.0
	WBCT Policy: **Trust Approved Work Sites**	9 Nov 2026

Background

This policy applies to all branches, project teams and volunteers of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust (WBCT). It ensures that works undertaken by the Trust have some form of permission or security of tenure, are lawful, properly authorised, and represent a responsible use of charitable resources.

Policy

No work, whether funded or volunteer-led, may proceed unless the requirements below are met. The level of control and approval must be proportionate to the scale of work, investment and risk.

1. Legal Authority and Investment Protection

- A documented legal right to access and carry out work is mandatory (for example, ownership, lease, licence or other formal agreement). No written permission means no work, except that verbal permission may be used for non-intrusive exploratory studies.
- Written landowner permission is required for minor works (email is acceptable) and for any physical intervention during surveys or investigations.
- Where material funds are committed, consider protection such as freehold ownership, a long-term lease (normally 25 years or more), an option agreement, pre-emption right or safeguarded partnership agreement. Any gap in protection must be identified and approved at the appropriate level.
- Works must support the agreed restoration line or strategic objectives and be consistent with the Trust Business Plan. Land control should be proportionate to investment.

2. Types of Work

- **Major projects:** restoration or construction of locks, bridges, structures, channel excavation/reconstruction, or work involving significant expenditure or engineering. Full project approval is required.
- **Minor works:** care and maintenance such as vegetation management, painting, tidying and minor repairs. Public access should generally be present; written permission and a record of the work are required.

- **Exploratory/survey work:** surveys, trial holes, archaeological investigation and non-invasive studies. Verbal permission may suffice for non-intrusive work; written permission is required for physical intervention. Such work must not escalate into restoration without formal approval.

3. Risk Classification and Delegated Approval

Classify land security for every project:

- Green = ownership or long lease (25 years or more);
- Amber = licence or short-term agreement;
- Red = weak, informal or no legal rights.

Land status	Project value		Delegated approval
Green / Amber	Low	Under £5,000	Branch; notify Executive Board
Green	Medium	£5,000–£50,000	Executive Board
Amber	Medium	£5,000–£50,000	Executive Board; notify Trustees
Green	High	Over £50,000	Executive Board and Trustee approval
Red	Any value		Explicit Trustee approval

4. Project Readiness

Before approval, confirm and record as applicable:

- Land/legal right to work, land-security rating and investment protection.
- Planning consent (if required) and environmental/habitat considerations.
- CDM 2016 status and responsibilities.
- Approved plans/drawings and engineering assurance where required.
- Cost estimate, identified funding, delivery timetable and available resources.
- Maintenance responsibility, site security and storage arrangements.

5. Escalation, Exceptions and Records

- Trustees must be notified before work commences where:
  a) land status is Amber or Red and expenditure is Medium/High;
  b) investment protection is limited or absent; or
  c) significant financial or reputational risk exists.

- Emergency or exceptional works require approval per the delegation grid above. Expedited approval, including by email, may be used; every exception must be documented and reported.
- Agreements and approvals must be recorded and stored centrally so they are available for audit and governance review.

6. Insurance, Responsibilities and Review

- Only approved projects are official Trust activities. Work undertaken outside this process will not be recognised as Trust activity and will not be covered by Trust insurance.
- All branches, project teams and volunteers must follow this policy; project leads must ensure permissions, risk classification, approvals and records are in place.
- The policy forms part of the Trust governance framework, aligns with the Scheme of Delegation and will be reviewed every three years.