

## **Memorandum of Understanding in respect of secretarial and administrative support provided to the Waterway Ombudsman Committee (the Committee) by the Canal & River Trust (the Trust).**

The Ombudsman Committee operates independently from the Canal & River Trust. Committee members are reimbursed their expenses but are otherwise unremunerated. The Committee does not itself have any office premises, or any secretarial or administrative support and since its inception has relied on the Trust to provide secretarial and administrative support. This memorandum of understanding documents the agreed position as requested and agreed by the Committee and is published on the Ombudsman's website in the interests of transparency.

Under the supervision of, and at the direction of the Committee chair, the Trust will provide at no financial charge:

- Secretarial and administrative support to the Committee, including:
  - Services of a named secretary.
  - Provision of appropriate rooms for meetings at the Trust's London Little Venice Office, provided the Trust is notified well in advance.
  - Sending out appointments to meeting attendees.
  - Preparation of a draft agenda for amendment and sign off by the Chair.
  - Collation and electronic distribution of agreed agenda and supporting papers to attendees in advance of the meetings, using the Trust's email system.
  - Taking minutes of the meeting, including suggested redactions, for approval as draft by the Chair.
  - Responding to requests for document retrieval by the Ombudsman or by Committee members.
  - Other ad hoc secretarial and administrative support requested by the Ombudsman or by Committee members.
  
- Document storage for the Committee; including:
  - Electronic retention of Committee meeting papers such as agendas, reports and minutes for 6 years as agreed by the Committee.
  - Secure deletion of meeting papers such as agenda, reports and minutes after 6 years as agreed by the Committee.
  - Review all other documentation when it reached 6 years old to make a recommendation to the Committee for deletion where appropriate.

Documents will be stored in a folder with access restricted to the Trust's Head of Governance Audit & Risk, and her small team, which includes the Trust's Assistant Company Secretary. The Trust will apply its normal security measures to this folder. The Trust's IT service provider has access to this folder to assist with technical queries and folder maintenance. The Trust's contract with its IT providers include appropriate confidentiality clauses.

Information held by the Trust relating to the exercise of the Ombudsman Committee functions does not form part of the Trust's statutory duties and is therefore outside the scope of the Freedom of Information Act as it applies to the Trust.

7 September 2017