

Boat Managers, Bruce Branch

The Bruce Branch of the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust is looking for a new Boat Manager. The current holder of this position is now the Director of Boats for the KACT's fleet of boats.

Background

The Bruce Branch of the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust offers affordable canal holidays to disabled, disadvantaged or older people, along with their family, friends or carers. The purpose-built, wheel-chair-accessible boats are based at Great Bedwyn Wharf, near Hungerford.

The boats are available for weekly hire for self-catering, self-steer holidays and the branch also offer crewed day trips. The Bruce Branch has a fleet of four wide-beam boats. They are especially adapted for wheel chair and disabled users.

The boats are reasonably complex with four high capacity battery banks and twin alternators with VSRs. The loos, fridges, heating, microwaves and sockets come from a 3KW inverter. The lifts, lights, pumps, showers and other services are powered by DC systems. The boats are fitted with rapid shore charging units for when the boats are moored at Great Bedwyn. Beta marine engines with PRM gearboxes power all the boats.

The Boat Manager is a member of the Bruce Branch committee, with the responsibility to manage the maintenance, repair and upgrading of the boats. Also ensuring the boats meet the statutory and H&S requirements and the boats are reliable, with the minimum of breakdowns.

The Branch also maintains a good selection of spare parts to ensure any breakdown has the minimum impact on the hirer. Records are produced of the engineering checks and maintenance undertaken.

During the winter months there is a team of skilled and dedicated volunteers, who along with specialist contractors, undertake essential maintenance work, statutory inspections and testing as well as improvements and refurbishments.

During the summer months, the Bruce branch also employs a call out Engineer, who can respond to hirer problems. The call out service is provided 7-days a week 8am to 8pm. The Boat Manager and the team of specialist volunteers and contractors provide additional technical support.

There is a 5-year plan that includes a programme of maintenance, improvements and upgrades to be undertaken, as funds are made available. The Boat Manager is responsible for the maintenance and upgrade budget, which is £20k to £50k per annum. Essential maintenance is funded from the annual operating budget; upgrades and refurbishments are funded by donors and fund raising.

The new Boat Manager will be supported by the KACT's Director of Boats, the resident call out Engineer and some very skilled volunteers.

Essential Tasks

- Understand the technical workings of the Bruce boats
- Represent the boats & the resident engineer on the Management Team
- Review breakdowns and failures with the resident engineer
- Ensure good maintenance and safety inspection records are kept
- Project Manage refits and major improvements
- Liaise with suppliers & contractors to ensure repairs & upgrade works are of a high standard and cost effective
- Produce monthly boat reports, ahead of the committee meetings. These detail the progress of refurbishment work, as well as maintenance status and cause of any breakdowns.
- Work with the resident engineer to produce maintenance and improvements
- Maintain a 5-year plan for the boats, which is periodically agreed with the committee.
- Produce forecast costs for the maintenance and improvements
- Agree budgets for the boats with the Bruce Branch Committee
- Agree and sign off large purchases

Skills & experience

- Logical, safety conscious and good at working with volunteers
- A good understanding of canal boats and their maintenance
- A good understanding of boat electrical systems and engines
- Able to manage upgrade and refurbishment projects
- Build and manage a small team of skilled volunteers
- Be able to provide support & guidance to the resident callout engineer
- Competent enough to cover, occasionally, for the call out engineer
- Able to design and oversee improvements & modifications to the boats
- Able to manage and report on a budget £20k -£50k per annum
- Preferably a qualified skipper