

## ARRANGEMENTS FOR LOWERING THE MIDDLE RIVER ('COLLEGE BACKS')

The Conservators have acknowledged that the practice of river lowering along the College Backs can have negative impacts on river users and the environment. Dewatering may also place riparian structures at risk. At their meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2008, Conservators decided that the annual practice of river lowering should be abandoned. The available 'window' for requests in 2008/09 was the last in the cycle under a system which had been in place for a number of years. A new system for river lowering came into effect in the winter season of 2009/10.

### Requests for river lowering and asset inspections

Conservators have agreed that **an application for lowering will not be granted for the purposes of an inspection only**. Those seeking to undertake inspections are advised to seek alternative methods of inspection (e.g. use of underwater cameras, divers).

Applicants requiring an inspection only are encouraged to coordinate their programme with other parties undertaking works which require a lowering, and wait for the next scheduled period for lowering.

### Scheduled periods of river lowering

**Every two years, the middle river will be lowered for one day only**, on a date published at least 14 days' in advance, to allow various parties access below the waterline for inspections, works and rubbish clearance. If the flow or weather conditions are unsuitable for a river lowering, a fall-back period is to be made available to applicants.

**The day for a free one-day lowering has been fixed to Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012**. Should weather or flow conditions be unsuitable on this date, the fallback date will be Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2012.

**The river will only be lowered for more than one day if a legitimate request is received** which requires a longer period of lowering. A period of up to 14 days will be offered to those seeking to undertake works. The fees for 2011/12 will be **£1181 for up to 14 days**. If an applicant cannot complete their work programme within this 14-day period, substantial penalty fees will apply. For the 2011/12 season, the **penalty fee for over-run remains at £500 per day or part thereof**.

River lowering will be permitted in the following years on a 2-yearly cycle: 2013/14, 2015/16 etc. The Conservators reserve the right to change this arrangement.

For the 2011/12 winter season, the following periods for river lowering have been agreed by Conservators:

<b>Principal period</b>	<b>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January to Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012</b>
Fall-back period	Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> January to Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> February 2012

Note: All works to the riverbank require a licence from the Conservators under the terms of the 1922 River Cam Conservancy Act (see below).

### Emergency works

Conservators reserve the right to deal with emergency applications (e.g. if a wall or bank collapses) outside the normal terms of agreement for river lowering.

### In-river scaffolding works

The Conservators can charge a fee for any obstruction in the navigation channel. For the 2011/12 season, the fees have been fixed thus:

Any obstruction lasting up to 14 days	£ 695
With per week or part week thereafter	£ 286
Administration fee / approval of plans without obstruction	£ 145

It has also been the pattern in the past that any extensions to requests should be subject to penalty fees as follows:

December or January twice the rate set out above  
In November or February three times the rate; and  
In March five times the rate.

Future fees are agreed annually at each January meeting of the Conservators.

### Applications for a river lowering and licensing of works

Applications for any river lowering, or proposals for works to the banks or bed of the river, should be made in writing to the River Manager at least 28 days in advance at the address given below.

### **SUMMARY**

<i>Type of works</i>	<i>Method</i>
Asset inspections (above, at or below waterline)	Use underwater cameras or divers Take advantage of free one day lowering (every other year)
Repair or improvement works	Make a request for a river lowering within the period agreed by the Conservators (every other year) Works must be licensed by the River Manager Flood Defence Consent may be required for works within 9m of the watercourse. Contact Development & Flood Risk, Environment Agency, Bromholme Lane, Bampton, Huntingdon PE28 4NE. Telephone 08708 506506.
Emergency repairs	Contact River Manager

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