

## **UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

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**February 2008**

British Waterways is committed to dealing with all customers and members of the public fairly, impartially and in a proper and considerate manner. We do not normally limit the contact that customers or the public have with us, whether in person, by letter, telephone or email. However, BW will not tolerate behaviour or communications that are unacceptable - offensive, abusive or threatening, for example. In such circumstances BW will take action to protect its staff from that behaviour.

If BW considers that a customer's behaviour is unacceptable we will tell them why we find that behaviour unreasonable and we will ask them to change it. If the unacceptable behaviour continues, we will take action to restrict contact with our staff.

A decision to restrict access to BW staff will be considered by the head of customer service and approved by a director. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate. The options we are most likely to consider are ;

- Requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only)
- Requesting that contact be ceased for a specified period of time
- Requesting that communications are civil i.e. not abusive or inflammatory
- Requiring contact to take place with a named person
- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times
- Asking the person concerned to enter into an agreement about their conduct

In all cases we will write to tell the person why we believe his or her behaviour is unacceptable, what action we are taking and the duration of that action. We will also tell them how they can challenge the decision if they disagree with it.

Where a person continues to behave in a way which is unacceptable, we may decide to terminate contact completely.

Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety or welfare of BW staff, we will consider other options, for example reporting the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give the complainant prior warning of that action.

Simon Salem  
Marketing & customer service director