



CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock

PUNT OPERATORS CONVICTED

3rd June 2015

The Conservators of the River Cam won a decisive victory today in the battle to prevent illegal commercial punting activities from the Garrett Hostel Bridge.

In a judgement delivered by District Judge Kenneth Sheraton, the defendant punt operators, Thomas Arnold, Milan Kovakevich, Samuel Matthews, Oliver Prevett and George Sugden, were all found guilty of offences under the Conservators' Byelaws. They were convicted on a total of 20 counts. The five operators, all directors of Traditional Cambridge Tours Ltd (TCT) a company providing punt tours conducted in unregistered punts, were fined a total of £2,350 and ordered to pay costs of £5000. Four punt chauffeurs were also prosecuted and convicted of operating unregistered punts. They were ordered to pay fines and costs totalling £1755.

The offences relate to activity by the defendants in 2013, but the cases were delayed in being heard because of a preliminary point raised by Counsel for the defendants. This disputed the power of the Conservators to delegate prosecutions to the River Manager. That point was decided on appeal in favour of the Conservators last year, and the cases remitted back to the Magistrate's Court for trial.

In giving judgement, the Judge said:

"The arrogance of the defendants towards the Conservators is evident in that the punts remain on the river, unregistered and it seems still working providing tours."

Jed Ramsay

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