



**DACORUM  
NARROW BOAT  
PROJECT**

**Information & Safety Manual  
for the Narrow Boat Belfast**

Registered Charity No 286458

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**Hirers should read all the Safety, Fire & Gas sections before commencing a cruise.**

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# **Safety while Underway**

It is the duty of Party Leaders to ensure that all crew members are aware of safety procedures and that safe working practice is maintained throughout the cruise.

Two lifebelts should always be located at the forward end of the roof and two at the stern within easy reach of the steerer.

Lif jackets are available in a range of sizes to suit all ages and all young people or poor swimmers should wear them when outside the boat. When not in use, lif jackets should be stowed away in the forward locker to avoid the belt ties becoming a tripping hazard.

Anyone seeing someone fall into the water should immediately shout "man over board" to the steerer, who should put the engine in neutral to avoid injury being caused by the propeller and then throw a life belt to the person.

Canals are not usually deep and everyone except very young children should be able to wade to the bank. You may need to tell them to stand up though because of the shock and the panic reaction. Do not put the engine into gear again until the person is completely out of danger.

Bridges are often very low on canals with very little clearance and overhanging trees can be more dangerous than they appear because they may have fishing line and hooks entangled in them. Steerers must shout an audible warning to anyone who is endangered from bridges or trees, it should never be considered funny to allow branches of trees to hit people wherever they are on the boat.

Crew should never jump on or off a moving boat, particularly not when approaching locks or carrying a rope which could tangle. Rope should always be thrown to the bank and picked up when the crewmember is safely on the bank.

All doors and hatches should be open when the boat is under way.

## **Safety at night**

For safety at night, ensure that all party members are familiar with how the cabin doors open; the rear hatch has a luminous safety 'push to exit' bar but the galley doors and hatch have bolts which may be left unbolted when not moored towards the bank side but should be bolted at night otherwise.

The forward cabin door has a Yale lock, which only needs to be used at night to secure the door but also to allow access to leaders who may be sleeping in the back cabin using the access system that you were shown on your familiarization day.

# Safety in Locks

Locks are especially dangerous and extra attention should be paid to safety both onboard and on the bankside while ascending or descending in locks.

At all times one Leader should be at the steering position and at least one other on the lock-side. Leaders need to be constantly alert in locks, continually watching crew and the progress of the locking. Locks are always a safety hazard, even in good weather and accidents often happen, not with beginners but as crew gain confidence with the process and begin to compete with each other, running to do paddles for example and jumping both on and off the boat before and after locking.

Crushing injuries are a risk in locks so arms, legs and fingers should be kept clear of the sides of the boat. Crew should never fend-off lock walls or other boats with hands or feet.

The boat may swing and jolt in a filling lock so no party members should be allowed to stand or sit on the roof while locking is in progress.

Crew should never wind ropes around their wrists or waists when belaying the boat because ropes can tighten very quickly and they may well not be able to hold the boat alone and can get pulled into the canal.

In the event of a crewmember falling into a lock, all paddles should be lowered immediately to avoid the person being sucked into the sluices; even good swimmers have been drowned in this way. The engine should be put into neutral and a lifebelt thrown to the person.

Windlasses should never be left on paddle gear while locks are filling or emptying because catches can easily slip and cause the windlass to spin round at high speed and fly off.

Loose clothing, Anorak toggles, scarves and even long hair can be dangerous, especially around paddle gear, so care should be taken to avoid anything which could catch in the mechanisms.

Do not relax your attention because you think your party have gained sufficient experience; accidents can happen at any time and dangerous situations can develop very quickly and even experienced crew will panic when faced with a challenging situation.

# **Fire Fighting Procedure**

Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the boat at any time.

Party leaders should locate and familiarise themselves with the fire extinguishers and fire blankets onboard. All crewmembers should be told that their first priority in the event of fire is to inform leaders and evacuate the boat rather than tackle the fire themselves.

In case of fire, get the boat to the bank on the tow path side and get all the crew ashore.

Contact the emergency services with the exact location of the boat, give a lock name or number or a bridge or road number to help them locate you quickly.

Then, and only if it is safe to do so, tackle the fire yourself. This should only be attempted where there is no danger from smoke inhalation or explosion from gas escape or other personal injury. If there is any doubt, do not let anyone attempt to fight the fire themselves. Human safety must always be the highest priority.

The boat is fitted with 1 Fire Blanket, and 5 Dry Powder Extinguishers.

Buckets of canal water can be used on fires not involving diesel oil, cooking oil or fat and to continue to cool a fire after it has been extinguished.

## **Fire Blanket**

The Fire Blanket located in the Galley is intended for frying-pan fires. Hold the open blanket in front of you to protect your body and hands from the heat. Approach the fire carefully - beware of panhandles. Drape the blanket over the pan and around the sides. Try to get a good seal to stop the flames escaping and exclude air until the fire goes out.

Leave the pan covered for at least 15 minutes as the oil or fat may re-ignite if the blanket is removed too soon. Try to avoid the blanket drooping into the pan or it may act as a wick and draw liquid through to burn on top. The blanket may also be used on a solid fire but it must cover the whole fire to stop air getting in.

## Dry Powder Extinguishers

Five extinguishers are located on board, one each in the forward locker, in the galley, by the rear steps, in the engine room and the back cabin. These may be used on any type of fire.

Instructions for operation are given on the label on the container. Make sure you are familiar with them. The powder is ejected in the form of a white jet and will travel between 6-9 feet. You will have only 6-10 seconds of discharge time but this can be controlled by the trigger. A dense cloud of white smoke will be given off when the powder hits the flames. The first burst is important and should knock down the flames. Then work around the fire with quick bursts into the centre of it to get at any deep-seated flames.

Check for any glowing embers, which might re-ignite. Remember water at this stage will completely kill the fire but get it ready before letting off the dry powder because the fire may re-ignite while you are filling a bucket.

In the case of a fire involving gas, turn off the gas bottle 'in use' in the gas locker by screwing down the knob, before using the extinguishers.

If this is not possible, turn the gas off immediately after extinguishing flames otherwise you will get a build up of unburnt gas, which may explode.

## Water

Water can be used on all fires on board the boat except fires involving any type of cooking fat or oil or fuels like Diesel oil. The water will boil on contact with the oil and burning liquid will be thrown in all directions. It may be more effective to scoop the water with your hands and throw it on the fire rather than pouring a whole bucketful on at once. Water may be used alone for solid fires (i.e. burning wood, paper, plastic, textiles etc.) or it may be used as a backup to finally cool the fire after using an extinguisher, to prevent re-ignition.

## Gas Safety

Gas is heavier than air and will collect and can explode in the bilges if allowed to escape. Always light the ring, grill or oven as soon as you have turned it on.

Party leaders should ensure that they know where the gas locker is and which gas bottle is in use. The gas locker should be unlocked at all times when the gas is turned on, in case of an emergency, which requires the gas to be turned off urgently.

To fit a new gas bottle undo the left-handed securing nut, swap the bottle and reconnect. Check the seal is gas tight with the gas-leak detector mixture provided; look for bubbles around the seal. Do not use the bottle if the joint cannot be sealed.

# Starting and Stopping the engine

## To start the engine

First check that no one is in the engine room.

Then check that the 'T' shaped engine-stop knob is fully pushed in.

Put the gearbox into neutral by pulling out the grey knob below the throttle, and set the throttle to about half revs by moving the lever forward about 30 degrees.

Insert the ignition key and turn to the first position. The ignition light will glow and a buzzer will sound. Turn the key to the second position to start the engine and hold it there until the engine fires.

If the key is released before the engine is running, do not turn it again until the engine has completely stopped turning or the starter motor may be damaged.

Even when the engine is running the lamp will stay on and the buzzer will continue to sound until the engine is revved up; this will trip the charging circuit and the lamp and buzzer will go off. If they do not, the battery will not be charging.

Turning the ignition off at this point will result in the batteries not being charged.

Bring the throttle back to tick-over and put the engine into gear by pushing in the grey knob. Moving the lever forward will engage forward gear and backwards will engage reverse gear.

## To stop the engine

Pull out the 'T' shaped engine-stop knob and hold out until the engine has stopped, then return to normal position.

The buzzer will sound to remind you to turn off the Ignition Switch.

# Daily Checks & Maintenance

## Propeller Shaft and Stern Gland

This is located under the step at the back of the back cabin. The stern gland needs to be greased daily, preferably at the end of the day, by screwing down the handle on the greaser until the slack is taken up and then one quarter turn. If water is flowing into the boat through the gland and greasing does not stop it, turn on the bilge pump to clear the water and call the Project. A slow drip of water will not be a problem but should be mentioned on your return.

## Bilge Water

Both the forward and the stern bilges may need to be pumped out.

Water in the stern bilge can be checked by looking under the floor in the back cabin. If there is water present, it should be pumped out. The pump is operated from the engine room by a switch on the ignition panel. Switch the pump on and watch till water stops flowing from the outlet pipe below the right-hand-side of the counter.

Remember to switch the pump off.

The forward bilge pump switch is located on the right by the door. This switch can be left on 'Automatic' for the duration of your cruise but you may want to turn it off overnight to stop the pump cutting in when people are asleep.

## Engine Oil

The engine-oil level will only need to be checked if your trip is over a week in length. Check the dipstick and top up with diesel engine oil provided if necessary, but be careful not to overfill - ensure that the dipstick is pushed right home when dipping the sump.

When the engine is running check that the oil pressure gauge is reading at about 5 psi. Switch the engine off immediately if it is not and call the Project.

## Diesel Fuel

On taking over the boat, the Project member will dip the tanks in the engine room to check the quantity available. There will usually be plenty for your trip, but on longer cruises it would be wise to check once or twice a week to ensure that filling up is not necessary.

The boat will normally use 10 to 12 gallons (44 to 53 Lt.) per week, if you do think the fuel is low, call in at any marina or boatyard (shown on your map) and buy a substantial quality, (£50) retaining the receipt for reimbursement later.

## **Water**

The level of water in the tank can be monitored by using the gauge on the wall in the front locker. Keep the tank topped up as you go, rather than letting it run dry. When filling, keep checking the gauge and stop at 100%. If you do run out of water then switch off the water pump (switch located in the same locker) failure to do this will mean the water pump will run dry continually and may burn out.

The tank holds 300 gallons to supply the galley, toilets and shower and may take up to an hour to fill if it has been allowed to run dry.

When using the hose it is advisable to flush the pipe through with clean water before starting to fill the tank. When filling is complete, disconnect from the tap and slowly reel up the hose allowing water to drain from the other end out as you go. This reduces the amount of water left in the hose to go stale between fillings.

Do not let the free end of the hose touch the ground or fall into the canal as contamination could get into the tank and infect the water. Grass on the towpath is usually not a very hygienic area.

Please remember to fill the tank before you return to Nash Mills after your cruise.

## **Battery Charging System**

Occasionally check the battery charging system. The voltmeters on the wall in the engine room should show 14v when the engine is running; this shows they are being charged. The charging system incorporates an electronic booster; this is a yellow coloured box below the control panel.

In normal conditions a single yellow light in the middle of three should glow. When first starting and for an hour or so the top green light will also glow, this is to indicate boost charge is operating.

If the bottom red light is glowing, the unit has failed, although the system will continue to charge it will not be as efficient and more care should be taken to conserve battery power by switching off unnecessary lighting.

Please inform the person seeing the boat in if you notice this has happened.

## **Lifebelts**

Each day ensure that the Lifebelts are in position on the roof of the boat, two at the front and two at the back.

# **Cruising, Locks & Mooring**

## **Getting underway**

First, make all the routine checks and fit the centre rope. Then start the engine and leave it running for 2 or 3 minutes with the gear in neutral (grey knob below the throttle pulled out). Cast off the mooring ropes and get them and the mooring spikes on board. Coil up the ropes so that they are ready for use again when you need them. Put the complete coiled stern line on the cabin top so there is no chance of it getting round the propeller. Have your crew ready with the shafts and get them to push the whole length, not just the bow of the boat, towards the middle of the canal and clear of the shallow water near the bank. Put the engine into gear by pushing the grey knob in, push the throttle lever forward and you're off.

## **Navigating on a level**

Canals vary greatly in depth and so your speed will vary accordingly. Do not try to go faster in shallow water by opening the throttle, as this only stresses the engine without increasing your speed. A good guide line on canals is your wash, if the wave from the back of the boat breaks you have the throttle open too far, so close it gradually until the wave stops breaking. You have then got the best and most comfortable cruising speed and throttle setting.

As a general rule you should keep to the centre of the waterway, since the water is deeper there and there is usually little or no weed. On sharp bends keep to the outside, you will run aground if you cut corners, keep about 4 to 5 feet from the outer bank. When meeting other craft keep to the right. When passing moored craft slow down to half speed. You are steering a very large and heavy boat of 25 tons and your wash is considerable - you can easily pull out the mooring spikes of the craft you are passing.

If the boat seems to lose power and this is not due to shallow water, or vibration is felt on the tiller, the propeller may be fouled. This may be cleared by running the engine hard in reverse. If this does not cure the problem, pull into the bank, in deep water if possible, stop the engine, and try to clear the fouling with the boat hook. If this does not work, see the section on Accidents & Breakdowns

## **Slowing down and stopping**

It is not possible to stop the boat in a short distance, in fact you should allow at least 40 to 50 yards to slow down and stop. Remember that when you close the throttle the rudder becomes less effective and so steering becomes less precise. The wind has a good deal of effect on the boat so be ready for it to drift as you slow down. You will need to use reverse gear to stop, select early and gently increase the throttle as necessary.

Always pause for few seconds with throttle in the neutral position when changing gear to prevent damage occurring to the gear box.

## **Mooring**

When mooring, do not always expect to be able to pull the boat close into the bank. Sometimes you may have to moor 4 to 5 feet out because the water is too shallow. To moor safely therefore, get the bows in first and get crewmembers onto the bank with the bow and stern ropes. One crewmember should knock in a mooring spike and secure the bow rope with plenty of slack in it. Then using the stern rope, pull in the stern as far as possible, knock in a spike and secure the stern rope. Ropes should not stretch across the towpath, but spikes should not be too close to the edge of the bank. Be careful not to moor where you will obstruct the canal, i.e. on a bend, or close to a lock or a bridge and remember that the water level may drop over night and you may be aground in the morning.

## **Locks**

There are five basic rules:-

1. When descending always keep to the front of the lock with the bows almost touching the bottom gates so that your stern will not get caught on the cill. Only move back in the lock when the cill is fully exposed and you need to open the gates
2. When ascending take the boat gently forward up to touch the cill. Do not use gate paddles until the lock is half-full, because the front cockpit could be flooded. As the water rises, the boat will ride over the cill and touch the top gates. Watch that the bows do not get caught under the beams of the top gates.
3. Always close all paddles and gates when leaving a lock unless instructed to do otherwise by a BWB notice or BWB staff.
4. Always keep alert in locks and if anything at all appears wrong, close all the paddles at once and investigate, make sure that your crew know how to close paddles at your agreed emergency signal quickly and safely.
5. An adult Steerer must be in position at the helm at all times while locking.

## **Bridges**

Most bridges are fixed and fairly narrow. Get the boat straight when approaching them and keep it straight. Some bridges either have to be swung or lifted, these need care in negotiating, particularly the lifting bridges on the Northampton arm. Pass through them slowly and keep well over away from the bridge, Some of these are finely balanced and unless there is a catch to secure them it is essential for a member of the crew to sit on the balance beam while the boat passes through. Make sure the stern of the boat is well clear before lowering the bridge again.

## **Tunnels**

When going through a tunnel use the headlight and look well ahead, trying hard to keep in the centre. Occasionally look up to see that you are under the middle of the arch. SLOW DOWN a little and move to the right for a boat coming towards you. Wear a hat and a waterproof - there will usually be drips of water and possibly small showers coming from the roof and air vents in the tunnel.

## **Sound Signals**

There is a code of sound signals, which can be useful but do not rely on other people knowing it, use hand signals to confirm your intentions.

- 1 Short Blast - "I am going to the right "
- 2 Short Blasts - "I am going to the left"
- 3 Short Blasts - "I am going astern (reversing)"
- 1 Long Blast when vision is obstructed i.e. blind bends.

## **Final Advice**

If you are coming to a sharp bend, a junction, a lock, a tunnel, a lifting bridge or swing bridge or any other possible hazard SLOW DOWN EARLY.

Give yourself plenty of time and keep your attention well ahead of the boat - have a member of the crew in the front cockpit to keep lookout.

Remember that when you slow down you lose the rudder control and when in reverse you have no control at all. If you are going slowly you can always rev up to gain position but you cannot slow down and keep position at the same time, you are at the mercy of the current, the wind and the momentum.

At all times the Steerer is responsible for the safety of the crew, other canal users and the boat, it is a very serious responsibility

## **Central Heating & Hot Water**

Heating and hot water are provided by bottled gas stored in a locker in the forward well deck. One bottle will be marked 'In Use' and the other 'Full'. Turn on the bottle marked 'In Use'. If this bottle runs out, turn it off and remove the label. Turn on the other bottle on and put the 'In Use' label on to it, then turn the 'Full' label over to show 'Empty' and put this on the empty bottle. Please tell the person seeing your party in at Nash Mills that a new bottle will be required onboard.

If you need to replace a bottle, use the spanner in the locker to undo the left hand-threaded nut, swap the bottle, reconnect and turn on. Check the seal is gas tight by using the soap solution provided. Retighten if necessary until no bubbles escape from the joint. If the leak cannot be stopped do not use the bottle and call for help.

## **The Boiler**

The pilot light on the boiler can be checked visually through the small window.

To light the boiler, first switch the rocker switch to on, turn the black knob round to the ignition symbol and push it in. The ignition system will tick until the pilot light ignites. Hold for five seconds and then turn to the required setting, number 4 is usually adequate for most washing purposes. Higher settings may be required in very cold weather.

The radiators are always on and need to be controlled individually if not required.

If the heating or hot water fails and the pilot light is on, check the level of water in the small plastic header tank at eye level, inside the boiler case and top up if necessary with the antifreeze solution which is provided in the adjoining cupboard; also check that the impeller is rotating.

If the heating or hot water are not required turn the black knob to Off and switch off the rocker switch to stop the ignition system trying to re-light (ticking noise)

## **Hand basin and Shower**

The hand basin drains into the shower tray so it is important to have the shower pump on 'automatic' even when the shower is not being used. This pump should automatically pump any water out from under the shower grating. If this does not appear to be happening, the sensor has failed and the switch should be held in the manual position until all the water has been pumped out.

Please use the manual 'On' switch for a short while to fully drain the shower tray at the end of your cruise.

## **Toilets and Pump-out**

Water for the flush toilets comes from the main water tank so it is important to keep the tank topped up when water points are available.

Ensure that the flushing levers on toilets are fully returned to the up position as it is possible to drain the water tank into the waste tank which will then need to be pumped-out.

The waste tank will be empty when you take-over the boat, and will be emptied for you when you return.

If the tanks becomes full during your trip you will need to get a boat yard with pump-out facilities to empty it for you. The cost should be about £15.

## **The Galley**

The galley is fully equipped with crockery, cutlery and utensils suitable for the preparation of hot and cold food; there is plenty of storage space and hot water. Hirers should bring their own cleaning materials, dish cloths and tea towels

Equipment in the galley includes a normal sized domestic four-ring cooker with an oven and grill. There is also a small electric fridge which may need to be supplemented with cold boxes in summer or for larger items.

The switch for the fridge is on the top of the appliance under the worktop. If the switch shows a red area then the fridge is switched on. There is also a control to set the temperature. A flashing red light indicates a loss of battery power and that the fridge is no longer actively cooling food.

Please ensure that the fridge is emptied and thoroughly cleaned at the end of your trip and that the door is left open with a towel or something to ensure that it does not swing closed and cause mould to occur inside.

## **The Electric System**

The electrical system on the boat is 12v and there are no outlets available to connect consumer devices to the system nor should any attempt be made to do this.

There is one cigarette lighter outlet in the back cabin solely to enable leaders to charge their mobile phones for safety reasons.

## **Lighting**

The boat is fitted throughout with fluorescent lights, which are bright enough to allow project work, games or reading to be undertaken after dark.

It is important to use the lighting as sparingly as possible. The lighting is run from a set of batteries which are charged up when the engine is running. The lamps are of quite a high wattage and it is possible to flatten the batteries.

Although this will not prevent you starting the engine, it will mean that you have no light, probably will not have any water because the water pump is electric and the central heating will not work. You will also have to light the cooker by hand.

So turn off all lights when they are not absolutely necessary and be especially frugal if you do not intend to do a full day's cruising on a particular day because the batteries will not get sufficiently recharged.

# Winding points Northbound

Remember there are a limited number of places where you can turn the boat.

Travelling Northwards from Nash Mills these are:

Apsley (below lock 66)

Nash Mills (above lock 68)

Hemel Hempstead (after bridge ? in the entrance to the river Gade)

Winkwell (below lock 61, before the marina area)

Berkhamstead (opposite Railway station)

Cowroast (above lock 46)

Bulbourne (south of bridge 133)

Wendover arm (entrance)

Aylesbury Arm (entrance)

Grove Lock (below lock 28)

Leighton Buzzard (south of bridge 114)

Old Linslade (north of bridge 110)

Bletchley (south of bridge 96)

Linford Wharf (bridge 77)

Old Wolverton (north of bridge 68)

Cosgrove (below lock 21)

Stoke Bruerne (below bottom lock 20)

Stoke Bruerne (south entrance to Blisworth Tunnel)

Gayton Junction between bridges 28 and 29 Whilton Marina (below lock 13)

Norton Junction

Braunston Turn

# Winding points Southbound

Kings Langley (above lock 69A)

Kings Langley (above lock 70)

Watford (below lock 78)

Watford (below lock 79)

Watford (below lock 80)

Batchworth (below lock 81)

Copper Mill (above lock 84)

Below bridge 179

Below lock 86

Uxbridge (below and above lock 88)

Cowley (entrance to Slough Arm)

Bulls Bridge Junction (entrance to Paddington Arm)

# Handback Procedure

Please be back at the mooring half an hour before the time given as the end of the cruise so that the boat is ready for checking when the Project Member arrives.

All your party and their belongings should be off the boat and all equipment in its proper place. Please double check under bunks and in the cupboards for personal belongings and items of clothing.

Checking may take up to an hour and a Party Leader must be prepared to wait until this is completed.

If your return is going to be delayed, please let the Project know as soon as possible using the contact number you were given when you took over the boat.

Please particularly check the following:-

The boat should be securely moored

There should be no knots in the ropes

All windows should be properly fastened

Gas bottle turned off

Electricity switched off

Water tanks full

All rubbish removed - rubbish may be put in the bin inside the gates of the Nash Mills Centre

Oven empty and clean

Grill Pan empty and clean

Fridge empty and clean with the door propped open

Bread bin empty and clean

Boat generally clean and tidy, and floor mopped.

Please inform the Project member of any items missing or damaged so replacements or repairs can be arranged before the next hire party arrive.

If the boat is not ready for checking or is late back without the project being informed, a charge of £15 per hour may be charged to the Security Deposit

# Breakdowns

First work out your exact location, a lock or bridge number is good or identify a significant building or place and call the contact number which is on your hire agreement form.

If we have to come out to you it is very helpful if the boat can be moored near a road bridge. If the nature of the breakdown allows, please continue to the next bridge or road access point.

Please be as precise as possible with the description of the nature of the fault.

If you cannot reach the allocated contact person you may try other numbers below.

Graeme Pattison            01727 863469            or            07957 444370

Geoff Simmons            01442 833649

Bob Lloyd            01442 264065            or            07949 849764

The Project            01442 230333

Either a project member will visit you and attend to the problem or an engineer from our Recovery Service will be called out

If you can not contact anyone from the Project and the nature of the problem means that you cannot continue with your trip you may contact the Recovery Service directly.

Call, River and Canal Rescue Service on **0800 071 8021**

The account is in the name of **Mrs Cunningham**

and our membership No. is **500291**

This is an expensive service and should be not used unless the problem is seriously preventing you from continuing with your trip and you have tried all the other options. Trivial or unnecessary use of this service will be charged to the security deposit.

# Accidents

In the event of an accident or a potentially serious near miss the hirer must complete an Accident Report form with:

- \* The name and registration number of any other craft involved together with the name of the owner or hirer and the name of the hire company.
- \* The names and addresses of any witnesses.
- \* A description of the incident together with details of damage to the craft, other vessels or BWB Property.
- \* No member of the party should admit liability at this stage.

The Project member seeing in the craft must be made aware of any damage caused and given the report form.

# Problems with the Canal or BWB facilities

Any problems with water levels, locks, paddle gear, waterpoints etc. should be reported to British Waterways on either

British Waterways Canals      0800 479 9947 (Freephone)

British Waterways Office      01923 201120

Other useful numbers might are.

Environment Agency      0845 933 3111

Flood Line      0845 988 1188

Give an exact description of the problem and its location, and wait for assistance.

Please inform the Project if the problem is likely to delay your return.

# Terms and Conditions of Hire

## 1 Information on the web site and leaflets

Every effort is made to ensure that the description of the craft and its facilities are accurate but the Project cannot accept liability for any inaccuracies that may exist. The craft may be viewed by appointment before booking.

## 2 Booking

A booking has been made when a third of the total hire fee has been paid and a hire invoice issued. The balance of the hire fee and the security deposit must reach the Project three weeks before the craft is taken over.

## 3 Security Deposit

Hirers shall pay in addition to the hire fee a security deposit in one of two ways:

- a) An all inclusive fully refundable security deposit or
- b) A lower refundable security deposit together with a non-returnable insurance excess waiver fee. (see 5 & 6 below and the Hire Charges leaflet or section of the web site)

The security deposit will be refunded by cheque two weeks after the hire period provided the craft and fittings are undamaged, the inventory is complete and the craft has not been involved in an accident.

## 4 Cancellation

Should the hirer wish to cancel the booking they must immediately notify the Project and return the hire invoice. If the craft is subsequently re-let for that period the Project will return the hire fee less a re-letting charge of 15% of the hire charge. If the craft is not re-let the hirer is responsible for the prompt payment of the full hire charge. (Hire charge excludes security deposit and insurance fee). On cancellation by the Project all fees will be returned. The hirer shall have no further claim on the Project.

## 5 Insurance

Insurance of the craft (except the first £250 of each and every claim) and Third Party liability up to a limit of £1,000,000 is included in the hire fee.

The hirer takes full responsibility for the care and navigation of the craft. Negligence by the hirer is not covered by insurance. Losses and expenses not recoverable by insurance are the responsibility of the hirer.

The hirer or hiring organisation or members of the hiring party can have no claim of liability against the Dacorum Narrow Boat Project or its agents.

## 6 Liability to Waterways Authorities

The hirer shall be responsible for any charges made by Water Authorities in respect of loss of water or other damage to Waterways property arising through his or her negligence.

## 7 Party Leader & Steerer

At least two members of the party must be competent to navigate the canal safely. Any other members of the party may only steer the craft under direct supervision. Both the Party Leader and Second Steerer shall satisfy the Project as to their competence to properly supervise a party. The Project reserves the right to refuse to hand over the craft to any person who in their opinion is not suitable to take charge, in which case all fees will be refunded.

Two adults in charge of the hiring party shall supervise the party at all times. One adult in charge must be at the steering position at all times when the craft is underway, the engine is running or the craft is not moored.

## 7 Hire of craft with a Project Steerer

The Project Steerer is responsible for the navigation of the craft with the assistance of the party when required to operate locks or similar activities. The Steerer cannot be held responsible for any injury to hirers, or for any loss or damage to their property during the period of hire.

## 9 Life Jackets

Life jackets are available to hiring parties if required at no extra charge but sizes and quantities should be given in advance on the booking form. Loss of or damage to jackets will be charged to the security deposit.

## 10 Taking over the craft

The hirer shall sign and agree with the Project member seeing out the craft the condition and presence of all items on the inventory and shall from then on assume full responsibility for the craft and contents.

Loss of or damage to items will be charged against the security deposit at the value stated on the inventory.

## 11 Information and Safety Manual

Hirers must read the Information and Safety Manual before commencing any cruise.

## 12 Cruising

The hire charge includes a permit to cruise waterways controlled by BWB, an additional permit is required to cruise on rivers. The Project can not be held responsible for delays due to breakdown or repairs to bridges or locks etc. flood, drought or any other cause beyond the control of the Project

## 13 Navigation

The vessel must not be driven at a speed of more than 4 mph or at a speed which creates a breaking wash on the bank. The craft shall not be navigated after sunset or before dawn. Towing is not allowed.

## 14 Lifebelts

While underway four lifebelts must be located on the roof of the craft, two at the stern forward of the steerer and two at the front of the cabin roof. This is an insurance requirement and must be observed.

## 15 Pump out of waste tanks

Tanks will be empty on hand-over of the craft to the hirer and will be emptied by the Project on its return. The cost of pumping out the tanks during the period of hire is the responsibility of the hirer.

## 16 Accidents

In the event of an accident or a potentially serious near miss the hirer must complete an Accident Report form with:

- \* The name and registration number of any other craft involved together with the name of the owner or hirer and the name of the hire company
- \* The names and addresses of any witnesses.
- \* A description of the incident together with details of damage to the craft, other vessels or BWB Property.
- \* No member of the party should admit liability at this stage.

The Project member seeing in the craft must be made aware of any damage caused and given the report form.

## 17 Breakdown

A breakdown should be reported to the Project in the first instance and efforts will be made to rectify the problem. The hirer shall have no claim upon the Project as a result of any breakdown or failure of the craft or its engine or equipment. Where such a breakdown is caused by the negligence of the hirer in failing to carry out instructions given by the Project, the Project shall have the right to claim upon the hirer in respect of expenses involved in rectifying the matter.

## 18 Alcohol

Alcohol is not permitted onboard the craft at any time, and party leaders should not become intoxicated whilst in charge of the craft or in charge of the party.

## 19 Electrical equipment

No electrical equipment may be connected to the boats electrical system other than a leader's mobile phone charger.

## 20 Live bait

Live bait must not be used or stored on the boat.

## 21 Return of the craft

The hirer is responsible for the return of the craft in a clean and tidy condition at the agreed time. The hirer is responsible for allowing sufficient margin of time for contingencies. Late return of the craft will incur an hourly waiting charge.

## 22 Vehicles left at Nash Mills Recreation Centre

Vehicles may be left at the Nash Mills Recreation Centre at the owner's risk, but access to the Centre cannot be guaranteed at times other than those at handover and handback of the boat.