

# Welcome to Moonraker Canalboats

*This Handbook contains information to help make your holiday as safe and enjoyable as possible.*

*Please read this through carefully and bring it with you for your crew to read and as a reference document during your holiday.*

Please use this space below to list any queries you may wish to ask on arrival:

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# Health & Safety Warnings

## Limits of Cruising Area

The Kennet & Avon Navigation includes the River Avon navigation from the Bristol Channel to Bath, the Kennet & Avon Canal from Bath to Newbury and on to the River Thames at Reading. Your cruising limits will depend on your previous narrow boating experience, to reflect the relative challenges of the different waterways.

No hirer may take a boat on to the River Avon at Bath or go beyond Hanham Lock towards Bristol, or on to the River Thames at Reading without written permission given by Moonraker Canalboats Ltd, and the appropriate navigation licences.

- If you have no previous experience, you will be limited to the K&A Canal from Bath Top Lock 13 and Kintbury Bridge 75.
- If your experience is limited, you will be restricted to the Navigation from Hanham Lock 1 at Bath and Newbury Wharf.
- Experienced boaters will be allowed further a field. You will be informed what your own personal limits are before your holiday.

***Do not exceed them - you may invalidate your and our insurance!***

If you cruise on the River Avon below Bath, or the Kennet and Avon east of Kintbury, take special care to read the 'Navigation Notes' in the red Nicholson's Guide provided on the boat, which you should have to hand whenever under way. In particular, beware of weirs; they can be very dangerous, with strong currents, and may not be clearly signposted. **The anchor must be ready for immediate use when on a river.** You must not cruise after sunset, or before dawn. If in doubt about the safety of navigation, stop, moor up, and phone Moonraker for advice.

## Overnight Mooring

When mooring on a river, plan ahead to moor overnight, ensure there is enough time to find alternative moorings if the one planned is unavailable. Secure the boat with mooring ropes to bollards or rings at visitor mooring sites only and where possible moor facing upstream, particularly in a fast current. There is a chain and padlock, supplied for extra security, especially when mooring in towns. **ALWAYS DEPLOY THE ANCHOR WHEN MOORED ON THE RIVER.**

When mooring please follow the guidelines in the Boater's Handbook pages 7 – 9. In particular do not moor where there are turning points, white bollards or permanent / private mooring signs.

## Lifejackets

Weak swimmers, non-swimmers and children are strongly advised to wear lifejackets. Aboard you will find 2 children's lifejackets and 4 adult. If more are required please inform us in advance of your holiday.

## Children

Children, boats and water are a heady combination and need careful supervision. Make sure your older children understand the hazards and never let the younger ones out of sight. All children should wear lifejackets, unless strong swimmers. **Never let young children or pets on the aft deck when under way specifically within the sweep of the tiller bar.**

***Under no circumstances should any child under the age of 18 be left at the helm without the supervision of a competent member of the crew!***

**In the event of persons overboard IMMEDIATELY PUT THE BOAT IN NEUTRAL and STOP the engine, never approach with the propeller turning!**

## Canal Water

The canal is used by many creatures including us humans, this means that we have a duty to try our best not to pollute the water in any way. Please try to use only a small amount of detergent and only those provided by us.

Swimming is not allowed by law and in the event of anybody falling in please be advised that the water is unclean. If swallowed medical advice may be necessary, particularly in the case of small children. If appearing unwell call NHS Direct on 08 45 46 47.

## Locks

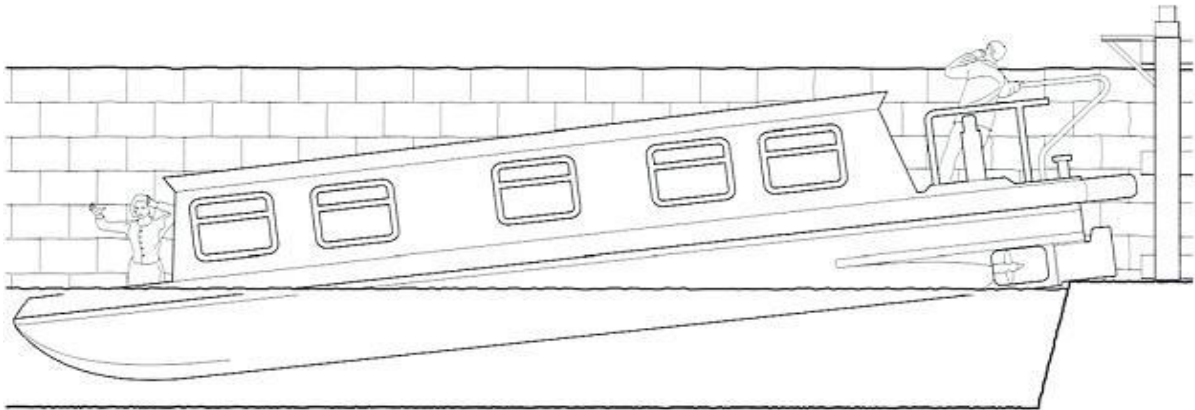
The locks on the K&A are larger than on most canals and have two lock gates at either end so you will need to open both fully for a Moonboat. Refer to the 'Boater's Handbook' and DVD provided in this pack before you arrive for your holiday. Familiarize yourself with how locks work, always be aware of the CILL and your crew.

There is a degree of etiquette in lock usage, particularly when the canal is busy. Every lock uses thousands of gallons of water which is permanently lost to the canal, so water must not be wasted. If you approach a lock that is set against you, make sure no one is approaching from the other side before you set the lock. If a lock has to be emptied or filled, it is a waste unless a boat is in it! When leaving locks always make sure all the paddles and gates are set in the closed position, unless there is a notice posted asking you to leave a particular paddle open.

These locks can take two full-length narrow boats but **ONLY ONE MOONBOAT!**

## WARNING!

Never leave the helm whilst in a lock and keep the engine running, you will need the engine to control the boat in the lock. Remember that locks have a cill under the uphill gate that can damage the rudder if the boat is allowed to settle on it. If the lock continues to empty with the boat hung on the cill, you run the risk of **SINKING** as the bow tilts down.



This is a picture of a boat caught on the cill! This is extremely dangerous, avoid it at all costs by checking that the boat is in front of the cill marker at all times, when descending a lock! In the event of being caught on the cill **CLOSE** all paddles immediately!

### **REMEMBER:**

- Take your time
- Make sure you and your crew are wearing life jackets, especially the children
- Keep your dog/s shut in the boat or on a tight lead and under adult control
- Do not attempt to fend off in a lock; the sides are wet and slippery.
- The skipper must remain at the helm with the engine running and in gear
- The stern and bow of the boat should never touch the lock gates
- **KEEP FORWARD OF THE CILL MARKER!**
- Never steal a lock set against you when traffic is approaching from the opposite direction.
- Close all paddles and gates behind you unless otherwise instructed.
- Do not expect help from members of the public when opening and closing *paddles*

## **Swing Bridges**

Swing bridges are quite common on the K&A. If you study your Boater's Handbook in advance, you will be ready for them. Never attempt to cruise under a swing bridge; they are too low! Their operation is fairly straightforward, you will need to moor up and send a member of your crew with a windlass and BWB key to unlock the bridge before opening it. Most swing bridges open anti-clockwise. Please be gentle and do not rush to open or close these.

**BEWARE!** If the swing bridge is closed too soon you will damage the boat wait and check with the helmsman that the boat is clear!

## **Electric Bridges**

The first electric bridge you are likely to come across on a Moonboat is at Newbury. This is a road bridge and you will need to operate the road barriers using a windlass and your BW key to operate the swing bridge following the instructions.

## **Fog & Ice**

Please **DO NOT** operate the boats when these conditions prevail without express permission from Moonraker.

## **Drink and Drugs - It is against the law!**

The drink / drug driving rules are the same when it comes to operating a boat as they are when operating a car. In the event of persons causing an accident or damage whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs, **YOU** will be liable. The hire will be cancelled and you and your crew will be removed from the boat. **Please read the terms and conditions in your pack or on the website.**

## **Gas Cylinders / Barbecues**

Please do not bring any portable gas bottles or appliances on to our boats (Due to stringent regulations). BBQ's are allowed however, all charcoal and lighter fuels must be kept on the front or back deck.

## **FIRE ON BOARD!**

**Front doors, stern doors and side doors must not be locked from the outside or obstructed while the boat is occupied!**

The boat is fitted with fire extinguishers and a fire blanket. Familiarise yourself with their locations and operating instructions, and don't be afraid to use them if necessary. We'd rather clean a boat than lose it, or you!

There are smoke and carbon monoxide alarms located at various points throughout the boat. For your safety, please do not remove them or their batteries!

# Moonboat Systems

## Engine and Running Gear

Moonboats are powered by Beta Marine 50 bhp engine this drives the propeller via a hydraulically controlled gearbox. The propeller shaft runs through a stern-tube bearing, or grease gland, that is manually lubricated. The daily lubrication procedure consists of a turn on a brass handle, which you will be shown in your introduction to the boat.

The engine is started in exactly the same way as a diesel car, via the ignition key on the engine instrument panel. Ensure the boat is not in gear. You will need to turn the key anti-clockwise to warm the glow plug if the engine is cold, for 4-6 seconds and then turn the engine over by turning the key clockwise. Make sure that the key is left on 'RUN'.

You will find that before and after start a buzzer will sound. This is warning that the alternator is not charging; you will need to increase the revs slightly, until the buzzer stops and the rev counter registers to get the charge up and stop the buzzer.

## Fuel

The diesel fuel tank is under the aft deck of the boat. It contains sufficient fuel for at least two weeks of intensive cruising. Note that the central heating system also uses diesel, so if you're winter cruising you will considerably increase your diesel consumption and you may be required to check the diesel level from time to time.

## **Weed Hatch –STOP! *Turn the engine off and remove ignition keys!***

A weed hatch is provided to give you access to the propeller to manually clear any debris that might get caught. Always moor up, turn the engine off and remove the ignition keys before attempting to clear the propeller. Make sure the weed hatch is securely closed before setting off again. More than a few boats have sunk because the weed hatch was not properly closed! Be wary of fishing line and fishing hooks when clearing away any debris.

## Electrics

### Charging

It is worth making the apparently obvious point that all the boat's electricity is generated and stored on board. The system has a limited capacity to drive electrical loads and must be regularly and thoroughly recharged by the engine. Battery charging is permitted between the hours of 8 am and 8 pm. To ensure ample charging the engine must be run for 6 hours daily, whether cruising or moored. When charging whilst moored the engine revs should be at 1000 RPM. Failure to heed this point will seriously affect your enjoyment of your holiday!

### Engine Electrics

The boats are fitted with three electrical systems. Firstly, there is a simple, single starter battery, 12-volt engine starting system. This system is entirely independent of the other systems so that even if you manage to totally discharge the domestic batteries, you can always start the engine.

### Domestic 12-Volt Electrics

This system is powered by a large number of 110 amp deep cycle leisure batteries; these are charged by a 150-amp alternator attached to the engine. The domestic 12-volt DC system drives all the fixed internal and external lights, the water system, the bilge pump, the central heating and shower pumps.

### 240-Volt AC system and Inverter

This system provides power through an inverter that takes its power from the domestic batteries. It drives the TV, DVD/CD/Stereo systems, toaster, Jacuzzi Whirlpool Bath, kettle, microwave, hairdryer, vacuum cleaner and the household 3-pin sockets on the boat.

**Some of these draw a lot of power, please use them independently from each other, especially when using the Jacuzzi Whirlpool Bath to prevent overloading the inverter!**

The inverter monitors the available voltage and shuts itself down if the battery voltage gets too low or if too much power is drawn, in the event of this happening you may need to reset the inverter. If the voltage is too low, run the engine. When the batteries have charged, turn on the inverter. If the inverter over heats due to too much power being drawn, unplug any 240v equipment being used and wait for the inverter to reset. The inverter is a true sine-wave inverter, so electrical equipment that uses transformed voltage (computers, phone chargers, etc) will be quite happy using it.

## Exterior Lights

The boat is fitted with a number of exterior lights. There are the search lights and navigation lights; these are for illumination in tunnels only as you are not permitted to move the boat after dark.

There are very few tunnels on the K&A. but the tunnel you will definitely need to use them is Bruce Tunnel 103. The two switches for your search lights and navigation lights are on the main 12v fuse panel.

**Do remember to switch off your exterior lights after use to avoid draining your batteries.**

**NB Medusa has an additional search light switch on the control panel.**

## Horn

A large rubber button located on the control panel sounds the horn. You will need to know your horn signals (see Boater's Handbook p.36), be aware that you may know *your* horn signals but not all boaters do, so be prepared.

Also if there is a railway close by they may think you're a train!

## GAS!

The boat has a propane gas system supplied by two gas bottles located in the bow gas locker. These are fitted with an automatic change over valve and an isolator valve.

**Should you smell gas on the boat do not turn on or off any electrical switches including torches, switch off the gas at the isolator in the bow locker and ventilate the boat as well as possible. If the stove is alight close the air vents.**

## Oven and Hob

The cooker and hob are the only gas appliances on the boat and both are fitted with flame failure devices to all burners.

The burners are ignited with a 240v electrical spark, allow the gas burner to activate and hold on for a few seconds. In case of difficulties matches are provided.

Please clean the hob using a 'brillo pad' and **soft cloth only!**

**Aluminium foil is provided to protect the grill pan.** We have a limited time to clean the boat between hires; we need all the help we can get.



## Water

Of all the systems on the boat, this is probably the one that would most spoil your day if it were not available, so look after it! It's also the resource that you will use most quickly; you can refill the tank from water points located at intervals along the canal (See map).

## Water Gauge

There is a water gauge on the boat to help you monitor your use of water and so that you know when to re-fill. The water tank holds around 650 litres (or 4 full baths!)

The tank is stainless steel, and the pipes are antibacterial plastic, so if the water that goes in is good, it'll be good at the tap. Each tap triggers a 12-volt pump when it is operated, to provide you with a water supply at the tap at a similar pressure to your domestic system at home.

**The kitchen sink and hand basin** drain directly to the outside by gravity, while the **bath and shower** require a pump to lift the water to above canal level. The pump will need to be switched on for the bath to drain and will need to be immediately turned on for the shower.

## Hot Water

The hot water system uses two calorifiers to heat around 110 litres of water for instant use. The engine cooling system heats these calorifiers. (Or hot water cylinders). They are very efficient and the tanks are sufficiently well insulated to keep water hot overnight.

## Jacuzzi Whirlpool Bath

**Please note that to fill the bath to run the Jacuzzi Whirlpool Bath will use all your immediate hot water.**

Run your engine for ½ hour to re-heat the water, a good time is during your bathing session!

Ensure you initially fill the bath using only the hot water tap then adjust to temperature. The bath has a sensor in it so it will not run if there is insufficient water in it; the jets need to be covered when you get in.

The isolator switch to run the Jacuzzi will be shown to you during your induction. Always ensure that this is switched off when not in use.

Use the whirlpool and enjoy but be aware, continuous use will run your batteries down; it uses a huge amount of your battery power!

NB – Always fill the Jacuzzi at least 2” above the jets, allowing for displacement!

**No bubble bath or grainy soap please!**

To empty the bath switch on the drain pump, this will be shown to you on your arrival.

## **Toilets**

The toilet is flushed by fresh water. The toilet waste is macerated and pumped into an on-board storage tank. There is a gauge to inform you if the tank requires emptying.

In the event that you require a pump out due to a full tank please phone Moonraker to find the nearest pumping station and ask for assistance.

## **DO NOT**

- PUT ANYTHING DOWN THE TOILET THAT YOU HAVEN'T EATEN FIRST.
- In particular, DO NOT PUT SANITARY TOWELS, TAMPONS, WET WIPES OR ANY OTHER OBJECT in the toilet
- Please only use toilet paper provided.
- N.B. There is a minimum charge of £50.00 if they become clogged or blocked due to misuse! It is an unnecessary and a very unpleasant job to put right!

## **TV / DVD / Freeview / Stereo**

All this equipment is 240v. The TV signal is received by a fixed aerial and has a 12v booster situated behind the TV, this will need to be switched on for maximum signal (the sliding on/off switch is located on bottom of the white booster box). You may need to retune the TV on occasions, follow the instructions in the TV handbook. The whole setup requires the remote controls to operate at its best, so please leave them with the boat when your holiday is over.

The radio is DAB, so it should periodically retune to find the best frequency for your station. When the wine has flowed, and you feel the need to listen to Spinal Tap at megawatts, remember that the boat next door may be full of Radio 3 aficionados who do not appreciate your taste in music, so be courteous. Incidentally, the same applies if the tastes are the other way round!

## **Central Heating**

A diesel-fired heater in the engine compartment supplies hot water to radiators in the bedrooms, bathrooms and corridor.

There are thermostats fitted to the radiators for your convenience.

The heating process is quite heavy on 12v power usage, so check that the batteries are reading a minimum of 12v before switching on. If the voltage gets too low the heating will switch itself off, but by then not much else will work.

## **Squirrel Multi-Fuel Stove**

In the lounge there is a Squirrel multi-fuel stove fitted. In the cooler months 1 bag of coal and kindling is provided, please ask for additional if required.

The surfaces of this stove can become extremely hot take great care and use the fire guard provided, particularly with children and pets.

DO NOT put anything on or around the stove to dry or store.

Always make sure the stove is closed down to a minimum over night or when the boat is left for any length of time. Please refer to the instructions of use on the boat.

## **Sofa Bed Combinations**

**Gently, gently please! Do not force!**

The sofa bed is a 'click-clack' variety; pull the sofa away from the wall about 10 inches and lift the seat up. Take out bedding at this point which is stored directly below, lift the seat gently away from you until it goes 'click' and lower the seat towards the floor. To return the bed to a sofa you need to do the reverse. Lift the seat until it goes 'clack' twice, put bedding away and push down to lower the seat, the back of the sofa will lift to its original position. Push back against the wall! Well done, it took me a couple of goes too.

*All these systems will be explained to you on your arrival.*

*Please use this manual to familiarize yourself and your crew to the boat and it's systems before your briefing on arrival, and as a reference thereafter.*

*If, having read this manual, you are unsure about anything please make a note on the front page and ask!*

## Cruising

Moonraker boats are entirely owned by Moonraker Canalboats Ltd. We love our boats; our aim after tuition is to leave you capable of maneuvering confidently and we ease, enabling full enjoyment for you and minimum repair for us and others!

Our training is comprehensive, in exceptional cases we have returned the next day for extra tuition if we feel it is necessary. Depending on your experience training usually takes 1 or 2 hours. We like to make sure you are happy and confident with the systems and handling of your boat.

One of our team will explain the boat systems to you and accompany you along the canal until you feel ready for us to leave you in peace ..... happy cruising!

To get the boat under way, put her in gear and move the throttle forward to go forward, backward to reverse! Remember that the steering is only effective when the engine is in forward gear. The boat turns about a point roughly a third down its length, which should be born in mind in tight manoeuvring situations. Use the push pole from the front deck to assist turning

Using a tiller to steer is simple – push to the right to go left and vice versa, push left to go right.

Use the tiller slowly as the boat takes a couple of seconds to respond.

**Steering at first takes a lot of concentration, so do not allow the skipper to be distracted. This is when accidents can happen.**

If you go aground DO NOT PANIC! Use the engine very gently in reverse to back away from the bank and use the push pole if necessary. ONLY use the push pole whilst on the boat and push against the bottom of the canal or bank. Care should be taken when using a push pole to ensure that no one is trapped between the pole and any solid object, including the boat!

### Bow Thrusters

Bow thrusters give you more control when manoeuvring. They should NOT be used for general steering of the boat. Tuition will be given on your arrival.

### EMERGENCY STOP!

**This procedure is extremely important to avoid accidents, which may result in damage to your vessel or others!**

**Full reverse throttle until boat is stationary!**

**This may seem simplistic but is essential to remember!**

Make sure that you have stopped completely by checking against stationary objects on the tow path.

## Speed Limits and Your Responsibilities

Please ensure that consideration for other users on the canal is implemented at all times. SLOW DOWN to tick-over past moored boats, however many there may be! You could easily injure someone if your wash rocks a moored boat.

A good cruise power setting is around 1000 rpm, the locals will tell you if they think you are going too fast. Please respect their request to slow down, graciously, *whatever* the circumstances.

Remember, the aim of your holiday is relaxation and pleasure. You're in no rush, after all...and ***you have more than 22 tons of steel moving through water with no brakes!***

On narrow and/or shallow sections of canal, considerably less power may be appropriate as at higher power the propeller just acts as a pump, pumping water from under the boat rather than moving the boat along the canal! This can result in the boat touching the bottom and therefore halting progress completely, **go slowly**. (See the Boater's Handbook and DVD for more information about boat handling.)

**Remember this boat is a Canal Boat not a Barge therefore:  
DO NOT BARGE! Slow down, pull over and STOP if necessary!**

### On your return you please ensure that:

The Hire is returned to base and vacated promptly by 10.00am (Unless otherwise stated on your booking form); please avoid a surcharge for a late return.

- If decks, gunwales or roof are muddy please wash down Using the hose, bucket and soft broom supplied.
- Leave the interior clean and tidy, a 'Henry' vacuum is Provided for you and also cleaning cloths and environmentally friendly cleaning products.
- Ensure you have all your belongings with you on your departure
- All breakages are reported in advance of departure if possible, to enable us to replace the item for the next hire – Thank you.

A charge may be made if the boat condition is not to the reasonable satisfaction of Moonraker on its return.

## PLEASE REMEMBER:

**\*Never Drink and Drive,** *it is very dangerous and against the law!\**

- Don't take risks
- Stay in front of the cill marker when descending in Locks!
- Read 'The Waterways Code'
- GO SLOWLY!
- Be a considerate boater
- Do not barge!
- Don't do anything you wouldn't do at home
- Do read the Terms and Conditions of Hire
- Stay within the agreed Navigation Route
- Always slow to tick-over for moored boats or hazzards

**DO HAVE FUN, BUT HAVE IT SAFELY!**

Many thanks from all of us at Moonraker!

### **Contacts:**

Moonraker Canalboats Ltd - (Office)  
10am – 6pm daily (except Mondays and Fridays) 01672 851550

Moonraker Canalboats - (Nikki Weir)  
10am – 10pm daily 07973 876891

### **Emergencies Only**

Joe 07814 401564  
Duncan 07898 412190

## Additional Information

### Anglers and fishing licenses

There are 13 angling clubs who manage these waters. They operate along varying lengths of the canal and river, many welcome day ticket fishing on their waters. You may encounter fishing matches, junior angling sessions and regular anglers during your visit to these waters.

Please adopt the following good practice in order to cause the least disturbance to anglers:

- When approaching anglers, please slow down to tick-over and pass, keeping as close to the middle of the channel as possible. Do not move to the banks.
- Please obtain day tickets to fish in advance.
- Please obtain an Environment Agency Rod Licence before fishing.
- Please fish from the bank and not from the boat.

Reading & District Angling Association, phone number: 07814 659564 for County Lock to Midgam

Bathampton Angling Association, phone number: 01225 448850 for Widcombe to Limply Stoke

For other angling related enquiries please telephone:  
British Waterways South West 01452 318000

### **Useful Telephone Numbers:**

#### 24hr Help lines

Canal & River Trust Free phone Canals	08004 799947
Canal Phone South Stoppage Notices	01923 201402
Thames Navigation Hotline	01189 535520
Environmental Agency Emergency Hotline	0800 807060

#### Navigational Authorities

Canal and River Trust - Gloucester	01452 318000
Bristol Docks – Harbour Master	0117 903 1484
Blakes Lock Reading	0118 957 2251

NHS Direct 0845 4647

Police (emergencies only) 999

Local Police 101