



# Boating Information Pack



**[www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk](http://www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk)**

**Thank you for requesting information about boating on the Basingstoke Canal. We hope the following information will help you to plan an enjoyable time on the Canal.**

## **Why do we sell licences?**

The Basingstoke Canal is an independent waterway owned and operated by Surrey and Hampshire County Councils. All craft wanting to use the navigation are required to have a licence issued by the Basingstoke Canal Authority on behalf of Surrey and Hampshire County Councils as the owning authorities. The funds generated from the licences are used to help operate and maintain the Canal.

## **To use your boat on the Canal...**

If you want to visit the Basingstoke Canal with your powered canal boat which is usually licenced on another waterway you will need to obtain a **visiting boat licence** from us. We can help book your passage on the Canal and send you a link to an application form and how to pay on-line.

You will need to complete the on-line application form, and provide your proof of purchase of the PDF ticket, boat insurance and (if applicable) a boat safety certificate to the Lock Keeper at Lock 1 at the start of your visit.

If your boat is powered, it is also a requirement to hold a valid Certificate of Insurance (minimum cover of £3million third party and *must include* wreck and salvage) and a Boat Safety Certificate (BSC) or a declaration that a BSC is not required (this is covered in the on line application form).

Unlike most waterways our locks are only open at certain times. If you would like to book passage through our lock flights, please contact the Canal Office by 3pm on the previous working day before the locks are in operation. Please note the Canal Office is only open Monday to Fridays, 9.00am to 4.30pm and is not open at weekends.

If you are visiting from a waterway north of the Thames then you will also need a licence from the River Wey Navigation (National Trust). If you do not wish to visit the rest of the River Wey then a reduced rate licence known as a transit licence will allow you to travel along the Wey from Thames Lock to the Basingstoke Canal junction.

For boaters who want to put their powered boat on the Canal for single days use from one of our slipways, we have a **“trail boat” licence scheme**. For further information please visit our website.

For boaters interested in mooring longer term on the Canal, please contact the Canal Office for further information and availability.

If your boat is unpowered, please refer to the prices on page 4 and “Unpowered craft” information on page 10.

## Before going any further please check...

**Dimensions of your boat. Our maximum measurements are:**

<b>Length:</b>	22m or 72ft with a standard pointed bow and rounded stern 21.6m or 70.86ft with square ended barge/pontoon
<b>Width:</b>	3.96m or 13ft with a standard pointed bow and rounded stern 3.65m or 12ft with square ended barge/pontoon
<b>Draught:</b>	0.81m or 2.8ft depending on water levels (Boats between 2.8ft and 3ft please contact the office prior to booking).
<b>Height above waterline:</b>	1.7m or 5ft 10in depending on water levels. (Lowest bridges are at Farnborough Rd A325 and at Pondtail in Fleet)

## Water shortages

The Canal has suffered from limited water supply since it was built in the 1790's. Unfortunately, this means the Deepcut and Brookwood flights are liable to closure when a lack of groundwater creates a shortage of water, usually in the summer.

Except in a true drought the remainder of the Canal (Woodham, St Johns and the Mytchett/Hampshire pounds as far as Greywell) is usually open for navigation all year round.

The Woodham and St Johns pounds are supported by a back-pumping system.

It is best to telephone the Canal Office or check our social media and website for an update on water levels before setting off.

## Which licence and how much?

### Visiting boat licence

Current prices for all visiting licences are shown below.

The maximum period for all powered visitor's boat licence is 1 month.

## Visiting boat price guide

Visiting Boats	1 day	1 week (max 9 days)	2 weeks (max 16 days)	1 month	Annual
Powered boats	-	£56.00	£81.00	£124.00	-
Powered boats with low/zero emission discount*	-	£45.50	£65.00	£99.50	-
Trail boat licence scheme*	£18.00 annual admin fee + £13.00 day rate or £10.50 per day rate at low/zero emissions discount				
*A reduction in 20% on the navigation fee for boats that produce low or zero emissions: hybrid diesel/electric drives (where diesel engine meets as minimum RCD2 or Euro VI requirements), hydrogen (as either ICE fuel or fuel cell), or battery-electric only propulsion drive trains.					
Unpowered boats	£6.00	£18.00	-	-	£50.00
Large unpowered boats**	£9.00	£28.00	-	-	£74.50
**Large unpowered boats are manually propelled boats exceeding three rowers or capable of taking 6 persons in total on board, all other boats over 20ft (6m) overall length.					

All payments are on-line through the web shop using the following link <https://shop.hants.gov.uk/collections/basingstoke-canal>.

For anyone that cannot pay on-line can pay by cash or cheque in person by visiting the Canal Office in Mytchett by prior appointment.

### Annual boat licence

This is a type of navigation licence issued only where a boat is registered with us as its home waterway. Before we issue an annual licence, we will need to be satisfied you have somewhere to keep your boat – this will usually mean that you need a **mooring agreement**. The **annual boat licence** consists of two elements:

- Navigation fees are charged depending on if your boat has its permanent “home” mooring above or below Lock 15.
- Lock usage fees are charged depending on which option is chosen. *Either* an annual lock usage fee of £134.50 for unlimited lock usage (subject to availability), *or* ‘Pay as you go’ return cost at £13.50 for Woodham flight; £13.50 for St Johns flight and £26.50 for Brookwood and Deepcut flight (£53.00 if all flights).

In most cases your home mooring will need a separate **mooring agreement**. The fees for mooring agreements will be calculated at per metre length of boat and will vary depending on the location of the mooring. For further information on the prices of the annual licence and mooring agreements please contact the Canal Office on 01252 370073 or email [info@basingstoke-canal.co.uk](mailto:info@basingstoke-canal.co.uk)

## To help you with your visit...

### Using the locks

The Canal does not have a major water source so there is a need to conserve water which means that we have to manage lock usage. Our main lock flights can only be navigated at certain times so that lock gates can be sealed after the last boat has gone through each day. We also encourage boats to share locks wherever possible.

Unless another boat is clearly waiting to use the lock, we ask you to leave locks empty with the lower gates closed and upper paddles shut. Although this may be counter intuitive it is done to conserve water as this enables us to caulk the upper gates quickly at the end of the day.

**Ash Lock (Lock 29)** is the only exception to this rule - please leave the lock full if heading upstream, or empty if heading downstream.

### Lock opening days and times

Locks (except Ash Lock) are opened by appointment only during the times set out below. To book a passage call the Canal Office on 01252 370073 by 3.00pm on the day prior to your intended travel. Please note the lock operation times below. We are unable to open the flights of locks outside of this timetable. Please note the Canal Office is no longer open at weekends, so you must book by 3pm on Friday if you wish to travel through the locks at the weekend.

Boats visiting from the Thames need to clear Thames Lock on the River Wey by 5pm (2pm in Winter) the day before the planned entry onto the Basingstoke Canal.

Locks	Days of operation	Boats enter at	Boats to be cleared by
Woodham Flight Lock No's 1-6	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday	9.30am	1.30pm if Woodham only  3.00pm if travelling downstream through St Johns on the same day
St. Johns Flight Lock No's 7-11	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday	9.00am	1.30pm if St Johns only  3.00pm if travelling upstream through Woodham on the same day
Brookwood and Deepcut Flight Lock No's 12-28	Monday, Wednesday and Friday	Upstream 9.00am or Downstream 9.30am	3.00pm
Ash Lock Lock No. 29	Always open – no booking needed (subject to water levels)		

All boats must be waiting for the lock keeper at the appropriate entry opening time listed above. Boats which arrive late will have to wait until the next day the relevant lock flight opens. If there are special circumstances for a different opening time then, in advance and at the Canal Manager's discretion a different time may be arranged.

Continuous progress should be made through each lock flight, to ensure that we can caulk up the locks in a timely manner and boats are clear of the locks by the designated closing time.

### **Planned maintenance**

We try to plan our maintenance work through the Winter months; however, it may be necessary to close the navigation during the main season to allow essential works to be carried out. For the latest information please contact the office on 01252 370073 or visit our website [www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk](http://www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk), follow us on Facebook @basingstokecanal.

## **Navigation Rules**

Below are some basic rules to follow that make boating on the Canal enjoyable and safe for everyone to use. These also form part of the Rules of Navigation which are also set out in the Canal By-laws and Boating Terms and Conditions. For additional general guidance on using inland waterways you may wish to consider further reading material such the Canal & River Trust / EA / AINA [Boaters' handbook](#) | [Boating on canals](#). Where there are any differences between this general guidance and specific rules in this document or the Canal's Boating Terms & Conditions then the local rules take precedence.

### **Speed limit**

Boats must not exceed 4 miles per hour (i.e. walking pace).

**SLOW DOWN! Do not make waves!!**

**Wash from boats is a major cause of bank erosion and damages bankside vegetation.**

### **Passing craft**

Please do not overtake or pass another craft on any part of the Canal without taking due precautions to avoid danger or risk to craft, the Canal, any other property, persons or works.

Please keep to the right when passing a boat that is approaching from the opposite direction. When you are on the right of the Canal the other boat should be on your left-hand side. If you are overtaking a powered boat then you should do this on the left of the powered boat, but only do so when you have communicated with the helmsman of that boat to indicate your intentions and these are acknowledged.



When passing under bridges powered boats have the right of way and unpowered craft must give way to them. At other locations the skipper of the powered boat is responsible to direct unpowered craft to a safe passing location.

## **Lock operation**

Boaters passing through locks shall be responsible for the operation of the lock and for the action taken by any other persons assisting.

Where a number of craft are in a lock together their skippers will be jointly responsible for the operation of that lock.

Entry into a lock chamber should be slow and controlled, do not use the gates to arrest the movement of a boat. The Basingstoke Canal locks are “wide” locks, boats must be secured by lines held by crew members when filling or emptying the lock so that the boat remains parallel with the lock side and doesn’t surge backwards and forwards; is not advisable to rely solely on use of the engine to prevent movement. Our gates are not fitted with rubbing plates and boats should not press against them during lockage.

Do not put ropes around the winding gear (jack heads). These are not designed to take any force. Use the bollards provided.

No craft may moor in a lock chamber.

The gates and paddles behind the craft in a lock shall all be closed before the paddles and gates ahead of the craft are opened.

Do not operate any lock paddles until all lock gates are closed, nor attempt to close or open any gate or paddles before the water is level on both sides of the gates to be opened.

Please close paddles before opening lock gates, to ensure debris is not forced into the paddle holes. Please do not remain in a lock any longer than necessary.

Unless another craft is intending to use the lock please leave it empty, except Ash Lock (Lock 29) which should be left either full or empty according to the direction of travel.

Unpowered leisure craft (except traditional horse drawn and “butty” canal boats/barges), RIBS or inflatables are not allowed to go through any locks and must be portaged around.

The lock chambers at Lock 1 and Lock 25 are an irregular shape. Narrow boats exceeding 6ft 10” beam (typically historic boats) should not share these chambers with another vessel as there is a risk of becoming wedged. Lock 2 is irregular in plan and should not be used by square ended pontoons exceeding 68ft in length – narrow and broad beam traditionally shaped craft up to 72ft in length will not experience problems at this lock.

## **Moorings**

Visiting boats can moor on the towpath side of the Canal for a maximum of 72 hours in any one place whilst in the course of “bona fide” navigation, then must move a minimum of one mile to a new site. Signs may restrict the length of stay, for example for the duration of use at a water point or designated visitor mooring.

Residential moorings are not allowed on the Basingstoke Canal. The exception to this is the 22 existing houseboat moorings between Locks 1 and 3 at Woodham and at Hermitage Flash. These are houseboat moorings only, and not for use by cruising boats.

Moored vessels should not be further than 1.2 metres from the bank nor extend beyond the centre line of the Canal. Like many historic waterways the Basingstoke Canal is shallow at the edges as there was no expectation for working boats to moor except at locks and wharfs.

Boaters are encouraged to moor at designated visitor moorings where a suitable draft has been dredged. In other cases, it may be expected that many craft will not be able to get tight to the bank and a gang plank will need to be used. In mooring other than at visitor moorings care should be exercised to avoid damage to aquatic plant-life at the canal edge.

Vessels should not be moored in any position that would reduce the turning space in a winding hole to less than a 26-metre diameter circle.

The Canal Authority expects all vessels to be always kept in a navigable and watertight condition. Officers of the Basingstoke Canal may in an emergency, or if other circumstances require, adjust mooring lines, board and move a boat to another convenient mooring for as long as the Canal Manager considers necessary. If the period during which the boat is away from its normal mooring exceeds 12 hours, the owner shall be notified of the move and of the expected duration of that move.

## **Windlasses and paddle gear**

Only operate paddle gear with a properly constructed lock key (windlass). A Canal and River Trust type windlass can be used.

Always stand back from edge whilst winding up the paddle gear.

Do not lean over the edge, stretch or reach for dropped or floating items whilst the lock chamber is filling and paddle is up!

Locking devices are in place on some paddle gear due to vandalism. Do not attempt to operate these until the locking device is removed by the Ranger or Lock Keeper.



## **Fuel**

No low flash point fuel (e.g. petrol or gas) tank or other low flash point fuel storage container shall be opened or manipulated whilst the boat is in or waiting to enter any lock chamber or under a fixed bridge.

When refuelling a boat, the owner must ensure that there are no spillages into the water. Good practice might include using only cans designed for carrying fuel, using a funnel and have absorbent materials on hand to wipe away minor spills.

In the event of an accidental spill of fuel or oils the boater must immediately inform the BCA Duty Ranger on the Emergency Contact number 07894 425588 – and then inform the EA there has been a pollution incident on the National Pollution Hotline 0800 807060.

There are currently no boatyards providing re-fuelling services on the Canal.

## **Drinking Water**

Water Points with fresh drinking water taps are located along the Canal (see *Facilities* below). These are for use free of charge to boaters in possession of a valid navigation licence in connection with navigation. They are accessed with a Waterways key.

Water Points must only be used to provide drinking water into a fixed tank or portable drinking water container and for no other purpose. Each Water Point is signed “Drinking Water Only”.

Hoses used to connect to the taps at water points must be made to food grade standards, and must be used only for the purpose of filling the on-board freshwater tank. Hoses must be stored on board a boat in a sanitary location out of direct UV light. Hoses must not be allowed to come into contact with canal water, and must under no circumstances be allowed to trail in the canal even when the tap is turned off or hose disconnected.

## **Angling**

Please slow down when approaching anglers and pass them carefully and with due regard for the position of the anglers’ lines.

Angling is not allowed from boats.

No fishing is allowed during “close season” 15<sup>th</sup> March–15<sup>th</sup> June inclusive. The Angling Rights are let to a licensee – please see our website for further details.

## **Water safety**

All non-swimmers are advised to use life jacket while a boat is in operation. Swimming in the Canal is strictly prohibited. Ensure children are accompanied at all times.

## Sound signals

Motorised vessels must always be fitted with an efficient horn that is audible at a distance of 200 metres. Standard navigational rules apply – however these are frequently not understood on inland waterways.

If signalling by sound be prepared for others not to understand the message.

## Night cruising

Boats should avoid navigating after sundown, but where unavoidable all boats including unpowered boats must have a steady white headlight.

Standard navigational lights of white head or mast light, green starboard light and red port light use are advised but not mandatory.

## Moveable bridges

There are three swing / lift bridges on the Canal – all are locked by a Watermate key (also known as “BWB”, “British Waterways” or “Canal & River Trust” key).

Please ensure that the bridge is locked once you have passed. The Canal Visitor Centre and many boat chandlers sell Watermate keys if required.

## Care to wildlife

Extra care should be taken during bird nesting season not to disturb nesting species on the water’s edge.

Any damage to birds or their nests will be deemed an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and appropriate action taken.

## Biosecurity

ALL powered boats must clear out their weed hatches and check around the outside of the boat prior to moving up through lock 7 to try and minimise the spread of the highly invasive **floating pennywort**.

Trail boats must follow the Check / Clean / Dry principles to prevent the spread of invasive species between waterways. To prevent the spread of invasive species ALL boats and equipment including outboard motors and trailers must be checked, washed down and dried prior to and after use on the Canal.

## **Unpowered Craft**

Unpowered craft are encouraged to use the Basingstoke Canal as a recreational and leisure resource and are a recognised user group.

Below are some basic rules to follow which form part of the Unpowered Craft Policy. Boaters are also subject to the published By-laws and rules of navigation.

### **All craft are to be licensed**

All unpowered boat clubs or groups must have a formal licence agreement with the BCA for their use of the Canal. Clubs affiliated to Paddle UK may use club owned boats on the Canal, but only if they have the current Paddle UK club boat licence sticker clearly fixed in a visible place on the outside of the boat.

All individuals who are not part of a club nor using the Canal as part of formal club sessions must have an individual licence to use the Canal. This can be a licence direct from BCA or a current membership of Paddle UK.

Paddle UK membership card or evidence of a BCA licence must be carried at all times to be shown when requested by BCA staff or representative.

Individuals hiring boats from a licenced boat hire company on the Canal property are covered by their hirer's licence for the duration of their paid hire only; boats hired away from the Canal may not come with a license – in which case a valid individual licence or Paddle UK membership will be required.

### **Use at night**

Use of all boats at night is generally discouraged, however should this be necessary then all craft must always display a navigation light (head torch or similar is appropriate), even when paddling in a group. In addition, you may wish to add a combined red/green bow light.

### **Adherence to speed limit**

The Basingstoke Canal has a 4 miles per hour speed limit for all craft under normal conditions. Unpowered craft may at times exceed this but at no point should they create a breaking wash.

### **Right of way**

When passing under bridges powered boats have the right of way and unpowered craft must give way to them. At other locations the skipper of the powered boat is responsible to direct unpowered craft to a safe passing location.

## **Care to wildlife**

Extra care should be taken during bird nesting season not to disturb nesting species on the water's edge. No weed clearance should be undertaken without prior permission of the Canal Manager. Any damage to birds or their nests will be deemed an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and appropriate action taken.

## **Biosecurity**

To prevent the spread of invasive species between waterways follow the Check / Clean / Dry principles to prevent the spread of invasive species. ALL boats and equipment must be checked, washed down and dried prior to and after use on the Canal to avoid spreading invasive species, such as floating pennywort, between waterways.

## **Facilities on the Canal**

### **Places to moor**

We have provided visitor moorings, many of which have mooring bollards, at the following locations:

#### **Woodham pound**

- Woking Town Centre – Woking Town Wharf / Bedser Bridge
- Bridge Barn - Premier Inn Hotel – Visitor moorings on towpath side

#### **Hermitage pound**

- Kiln Bridge (upstream of lock 11)
- Brookwood Country Park

#### **Mytchett & Hampshire pounds**

- Frimley Lodge Park – Frimley
- Canal Centre – Mytchett (both towpath and off-side)
- Mytchett Lake – Mytchett
- Ash Wharf – Ash Vale
- Farnborough Road (Old Wharf) – Farnborough/Aldershot
- Eelmoor Bridge – Farnborough
- Reading Road Wharf – Fleet
- Fox and Hounds Pub – Church Crookham
- Crookham Wharf – Crookham Village
- Double Bridge – Dogmersfield
- Barley Mow – Winchfield
- Colt Hill – Odiham
- North Warnborough Lift Bridge – North Warnborough
- King John's Castle – Odiham

In other locations the Canal is shallow at the edges which may make mooring more difficult. Canal edge vegetation is also part of the protected habitat – care should be taken not to cause damage to vegetated banks.

## Slipways, swing bridges and water point access

Slipways are available for use with associated car parks free of charge at Barley Mow Bridge, Winchfield, and Farnborough Road, Aldershot. Galleon Marine, Odiham also have a slipway for which boatyard service fees may apply.

A standard British Watermate padlock key is needed to open water points, swing/lift bridges and slipway barriers, which can be purchased from the Canal Centre or many chandlers for a small charge.

## Drinking water, sewage & rubbish disposal

Location	Water taps	Rubbish disposal	Elsan	Pump out
Bridge Barn	✓	✓	✓	
Canal Centre, Mytchett	✓	✓	✓	*
Ash Lock	✓	✓		
Fox & Hounds	✓ (Please ask landlord as a small fee may be payable)			
Barley Mow	✓			
Odiham Wharf	✓			✓ (a fee payable to Galleon Marine)

\*NB – as of March 2025 the Canal Centre pump out facility is out of service pending repair

## Public toilets

Public toilets can be found in the Woking Peacock shopping centre; 300 metres south of St. Johns Lock 11, in Frimley Lodge Park; 200 metres south of Ash Wharf Bridge and 800 metres north of Reading Road Bridge in Fleet shopping centre.

Toilets are also available during working hours at the Canal Centre, Mytchett.

## Dry Dock hire

Dry dock facilities are available next to Lock 28 and can be hired on a daily rate. For details please visit our website and contact the Canal Office for availability.

## Navigational map

You should have received a free leaflet with a basic map. A more detailed guide can be purchased from the on-line shop <https://shop.hants.gov.uk/collections/basingstoke-canal> or from the Canal Visitor Centre.

## Facilities near to the Canal

### Train stations

#### Within one mile of the Canal

West Byfleet  
Woking  
Brookwood  
Ash Vale  
North Camp

#### Within two miles of the Canal

Farnborough Main  
Ash  
Aldershot  
Fleet  
Winchfield  
Hook

### Shops (and nearest moorings)

- Woking (town centre – Bedser Bridge) Peacocks shopping centre next to canal
- St Johns (near Kiln Bridge, Lock 11) Shops in village centre next to canal
- Frimley Green (Frimley Lodge Park – walk through to village)
- Mytchett (Canal Centre) Simply M&S at local BP garage (10 mins walk)
- Mytchett (Canal Centre) Co-op (10-15 mins walk)
- Ash (Ash Wharf) shops in village centre next to canal, such as Co-op, Bakery, takeaways, café and vets.
- Fleet (Reading Road Wharf) – 10 mins walk to town centre
- Fleet (Pondtail Bridge) – small Sainsbury's next to Canal on towpath side
- Odiham (Colt Hill) – 15 min walk to town centre

### Pubs – \*\*on the canal – others are within a short distance of the canal.

The Wheatsheaf, Chobham Road, Woking, GU21 4AL	01483 773047
The Rowbarge, 39 St Johns Road, Woking, GU21 7SA	01483 761618
The Nags Head, Bagshot Road, Knaphill, GU21 2RP	01483 474602
The Kings Head, Guildford Road, Frimley Green, GU16 6NR	01252 835431
The Old Wheatsheaf, Frimley Green Road, Frimley, GU16 6LA	01252 835074
**The Swan, Heath Vale Bridge Road, Ash Vale, GU12 5ET	01252 325212
The Oatsheaf, 2 Crookham Road, Fleet, GU51 5DR	01252 819508
**The Fox and Hounds, Church Crookham, GU51 5NP	01252 663686
The Exchequer, Crondall Road, Crookham Village, GU51 5SU	01252 615336
The Barley Mow, The Hurst, Winchfield, RG27 8DE	01252 617490
**The Water Witch, Colt Hill, Odiham, RG29 1AL	01256 702778
The Mill House, North Warnborough, RG29 1ET	01256 702953
The Fox and Goose, The Street, Greywell, RG29 1BY	01256 702062

**Canal Office hours:**

**Monday - Friday**

9.00am – 4:30pm

In person by appointment only

**Canal Visitor Centre opening hours:**

**April - September**

Tuesday – Sunday

10.30am - 4.45pm

**October - March**

Tuesday – Friday

10.30am - 4pm (3.45pm Friday)

**To book a passage simply call the Canal Office on  
01252 370073 by 3pm on the previous working day before  
the lock flights are in operation.**

Basingstoke Canal Authority  
Canal Office  
Mytchett Place Road  
Mytchett  
Surrey  
GU16 6DD

Tel: 01252 370073

Email: [info@basingstoke-canal.co.uk](mailto:info@basingstoke-canal.co.uk)  
Website: [www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk](http://www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk)

 Basingstoke Canal

**Emergency Contact**  
**Basingstoke Canal Duty Ranger 07894 425588**  
**(24hr Emergency callout only)**

**Other useful contacts:**

National Trust for River Wey: 01483 561389

Canal and River Trust Boat Licence Team: 03030 404040

Environment Agency for River Thames: 03708 506 506



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