



Boaters' Update 25 August 2017

Welcome to the latest edition. As you'd expect, with this weekend's summer Bank Holiday, there's a whole host of fun, relaxation and celebration to be had on and by the water over the next few days. Do check out the [summary below](#) to find the one for you.

Aside from what's happening this weekend, this edition also covers how to view canals on Google, the best canalside pubs in the East Midlands, awards for lock keepers, and I ask you for your top five rules for boaters.

There's also the usual news round-up, this weekend's stoppages, and ways in which you can get involved. If there is something else you'd like to see in a future edition, then do [get in touch](#).

In this edition:

- [News round-up](#) and [the fortnight ahead](#)
- [Dredging](#) – it's not always a drag
- [The Last Cuckoo Project](#)
- More ways to [get involved](#)
- [Helping your fellow boater](#)
- [Maintenance, repair and restoration work](#) affecting cruising this weekend
- [Bits and bobs](#)

Happy boating,

Damian

News round-up and the fortnight ahead

Over the last couple of weeks you may have heard, or seen, that:

- 15 Aug – We received a generous donation of £2,500 from Bradford on Avon Secret Gardens Group to help support the work of the [volunteers who help us look after the local canal](#).
- 15 Aug – 17 volunteers from Network Rail recently spent two days out along the Grand Union Canal in Northamptonshire [helping us care for their local waterway](#).
- 17 Aug – An art project aimed at complementing the [corridor of colour along the historic Oxford Canal](#) has recently been extended to further help tackle the problem of graffiti along the waterway.
- 21 Aug – We have been temporarily transforming a series of historic lock gates and a bridge crossing over the [Rochdale Canal into rainbow colours to celebrate Manchester Pride](#).

Below I've picked out some highlights to see and do over the next fortnight. Of course, there are plenty of other activities and volunteering opportunities around the network: visit the [events section of the website](#) to find the perfect one for you.



Canal & River Trust

- 25 to 28 Aug – Punctuate a towpath stroll with some retail therapy at either the [Merry Hill Floating Market](#) (Dudley No. 1 Canal) or, from the 26th, [at Newbury](#) on the Kennet & Avon.
- 26 to 28 Aug – Head (Albert) dockside in Liverpool for a weekend of folk from internationally artists at the [Folk on the Dock music festival](#).
- 26 & 27 Aug – A little further to the north east you'll find a fun fair, food, water-based activities and much more at the [Burnley Canal Festival](#).
- 26 to 28 Aug – If you're looking for something a bit more southerly then don't forget that there's also the free-to-attend [IWA Festival of Water](#) where over 100 boats will be moored along the Erewash Canal as well as plenty of craft activities and stalls.
- 28 Aug – Even further south, in the heart of London's Olympic Park, there'll be a boat flotilla, dragon boat racing, canoeing taster sessions, stand-up paddle boarding, boat trips, guided walks, performances, pedalos, live music and dance, and activities for children (all for free!) at the [East London Waterways Festival](#).

Dredging – it's not always a drag

Earlier this week we released news of [a dredging project in Sharpness Docks](#). This made me think about the subject and thought it worth sharing what exactly goes in to each project.

We use several different techniques to dredge and choosing the most appropriate and cost efficient method in each case is key. Each project goes through a four-stage process to make sure we pick the right one:

- First stage - We carry out a hydrographic survey to establish the quantity of silt that needs to be removed. Then our environment team will complete an environmental appraisal to find out if there are any protected species in the area, whether it's a Site of Special Scientific Interest and if there are any time constraints we need to work to. The silt is then sampled so we can judge what can be done with the silt. We'll also consult with local boaters to find out about the stretches where they get stuck. We'll also take a walk along of the length of the dredging site with our contractors, local staff from the waterway, an ecologist and the project manager so that all aspects of what we want to achieve are covered.
- Second stage - We'll consult with interested parties and regulators. We may have to seek formal consent from the Planning Authority, National Park Authority, Environment Agency, Natural England, English Heritage, Marine Management Organisation or their equivalents in Wales. The contractor then negotiates access and/or disposal routes with local land owners. We'll price the work together with the contractor while they prepare the method statement and risk assessments for the work.
- Third stage - Undertake and supervise the works.
- Fourth stage - Review and record what was done. We look at what went well and very importantly what, if anything, went badly so that we can do it differently next time!

For me, dredging always conjures up images of a boat dragging a big scoop along the canal or river bed and hoiking out a mass of muck. As the title to this article suggests, this isn't always the case. There are two categories:



Conventional dredging is the most common we do. We use excavators either on the bank or mounted on boats to dig out the silts and transport them elsewhere for either; recycling, re-use or disposal. These come in all shapes and sizes to be able to operate on the full range of our waterways, from narrow canals to the biggest rivers.

Hydro dynamic dredging

Hydro dynamic dredging can be used in rivers and tidal waters and involves agitating the silts to re-suspend them, allowing the flow or tide to disperse them downstream. There are a number of ways of re-suspending the silts:

- **Ploughing** – a tug pulling a plough or harrow along the river bed
- **Injecting water** – using high pressure water to agitate the silt
- **Suction dredging** – using a pump or impellor to suck the material into suspension

The project at Sharpness, mentioned in the introduction, is a modified version of the final type of dredging. We are sucking up the silt but rather than leave it suspended in the dock (where it'll only eventually settle back down on the bed), it is pumped back into the Severn estuary from where it originally came. So, you see, it's not always a drag!

The Last Cuckoo Project

While some of you may have spent the last couple of weeks enjoying some well-earned R and R, the first half August – involved a lot of graft and muck for the Chesterfield Canal Trust (CCT).

In November last year [I mentioned](#) that the CCT had bid for funds from the Aviva Community Fund for an archaeological dig on the site of the old Bellhouse Basin in Staveley. Well, the bid was successful and there's a great report, with lots of pictures, on [the CCT website](#) showing that the investment and effort was well worth it.

More ways for you to get involved

Many boaters go the extra mile in helping to keep canals and rivers in good condition by [volunteering](#) or [donating](#). As you're such an integral part of what makes waterways so wonderful, I thought you'd like to know about other ways you can get involved:

- If you've been out on, or next to, the water over the last few weeks then you may have seen one of our teams [removing tonnes of duck weed](#). What would be really appreciated is, if you're back out there over the next few weeks, if you could [let us know](#) if you see any more 'blooms'. It's not harmful to people, but dogs and other animals have been known to mistake it for grass and ended up in the water. Significantly, if left to thrive, it can cause problems for other aquatic wildlife by



Canal & River Trust

starving it of oxygen and sunlight, so please get in touch if you spot areas along your local river or canal that look particularly bad.

- For the last few months we've been running our Boats in Bloom campaign and celebrating the wonderful contribution green-fingered boaters and canalside spaces make. Well, you've still just about got to time to vote for your favourites! There are six categories and the shortlist can be found [on our website](#). You'll see that there are two ways to vote, one by Facebook (the [links for each category are here](#)) and the other is [via an online ballot](#). Voting closes on 29 August.
- The hunt is on for the East Midlands' best waterside pub, café or restaurant. We want you to nominate your favourite spot for a beer, a butty or a fine dining experience. We're not suggesting you visit all of them (at least not before the nominations deadline on 30 September!) but do let us know which one stands out for you. More details and nomination forms can be [found on our website](#).
- Ever wanted a map that, as a boater, you could use to share those great little mooring spots you find with other boaters (along with other canal information)? Well now you can thanks to boater and web developer Tom Sapey. It can be done via a mobile device and used offline which will be particularly useful in those most rural of spots. Visit www.opencanalmap.uk for more information and get sharing!

Helping your fellow boater

I know not all readers are seasoned boaters but, even if you are, there's always something new to learn, for example about an unfamiliar stretch of waterway or a new-fangled gadget.

In this article, I'm asking you to share your expertise to help other boaters, new and old, on two different topics. The first is quite specific:

"How do you, without bow thrusters, steer your boat through the Audlem, Adderley and Tyrley Locks on the Shroppie Canal when the side channels are forcing you off course so fiercely as you approach the lock? If you get the front on target the back is then swung round so you still hit your boat and the lock walls!"

The second is more general:

"What are the top five to ten 'rules' that you want all boaters to follow?" For example:

1. Only moor on a water point if you're getting water and move off immediately after.
2. Never run generators before 8am or after 8pm (the 8-to-8 rule).
3. *And so on...*

Please [click this link](#) to send in your thoughts on navigating the tricky Shroppie locks. [This is the link](#) to send in your top rules that you'd like all boaters to follow.

Once I have your thoughts I'll collate them and publish in the next edition of Boaters' Update. Thanks!



Canal & River Trust

Maintenance, repair and restoration work affecting cruising this weekend

Keeping your canals and rivers ready for you to enjoy is a year-round job. From time-to-time this includes some major engineering that we need to temporarily close the navigation for. Below you'll find a list, by region, of anything that's happen that may affect your cruising.

Just click on the one where you'll be and a webpage will open listing any stoppages for that region (if your region isn't listed then, yay, there aren't any navigation closures there!). If you're not quite sure which region your planned cruise falls in to please take a [look at this map](#).

- [Kennet & Avon](#)
- [North Wales & Borders](#)
- [North East](#)
- [North West](#)
- [West Midlands](#)

When any restrictions to navigation happen, we get them up on to our website as soon as we can – always best to [have a scan](#) before you set off for a cruise. If you have any questions about a specific closure then you'll find the email addresses for our regional offices [on our contacts page](#).

.....
.....

Bits and Bobs

- Do you like to fish? If so, you may be interested to read the fisheries team [blog about sharing the space](#) – it promotes a respectful relationship between angler and boater which, if you do enjoy doing both, means you have to have some self-respect!
- Well done to the Trust's lock keepers for coming runner's up in the [British Marine Inland Boating lock keepers award](#), but credit must be given to the eventual winners at Abingdon.

Happy boating!

Damian