

More cruising speed feedback

I'd like to bore you a little and add my interpretation of Archimedes Principle. It says the weight of a vessel when immersed in water, is equal to the weight of the water that it displaces. So say a 15 ton boat displaces about 3300.00 gallons of water. That means that for every full length of the boat that it travels, it will displace about 3300 gallons of water. **A lot of water movement.** Just a way to give a little prospective of what is happening when you pass a moored craft, or when you meet one going in the opposite direction.

I have no problem at all in slowing down to tick over when passing individual boats and fishermen. That is a courtesy I would expect to receive from fellow boaters,

Where I do have an issue, however, is with the growing number of in line permanent moorings. Some of these seem to go on for miles and it can make it difficult to plan a trip when, instead of averaging around 3mph, you are cut down to around one to one and a half. Is it too much to ask the owners of boats moored in line to **moor their boats sufficiently securely** to allow the rest of us to enjoy and plan our trips by passing at 2mph or a little more?

Still I find **folks go past way too fast** only last week I'd been cleaning sides of boat so had slackened off ropes and was redoing them when boat sped past so fast almost pulled the rope out my hand and arm out of socket they could see us working on the boat but didn't slow up at all. We commented on their speed and they were quite abusive adding if we wanted to be past slowly we should be in a marina. Firstly there are no marinas in Wolverhampton area and I don't believe for a minute there are enough marina spaces in the country for every licenced boat. My mooring is within 200 metres of a lock and even closer to a bridge so boats should be slowing down anyway. Plus because of changing water levels from the lock we have to leave a little slack. We do use ratchet straps and have tyres to buffer the bank so are doing everything we can. If folk want to speed they should get a camper van instead of a boat and stop damaging the canal banks and other folks boats.

From my experience, worst offenders are those old converted carriers, which are massively over-propped for their current use. Even on tick-over they seem to "rock the boat".

Kicking back to tick over at the last possible moment seems to be popular too, so revs are low, but speed is unaffected.

Despite my knowledge of springs, ground anchors etc. I would never consider mooring on pins for the above reasons.

I was wondering if 'counting' may be the answer.

There was a road campaign to get drivers to keep their distance by choosing a fixed point on the side of the road. Once the car in front had passed, we should say to ourselves "Only a

fool breaks the 3 second rule". That takes 3 seconds, by which time we should not have passed the same fixed point.

On a boat, rather than saying "pass on tickover" which is a good start. We should count how many seconds it takes to pass a fixed point. If the number x 4 is less than the length of your boat (in feet), you are going too fast.

The base message is, "If you don't have tight ropes any passing boat will mean you get bumped around."

Ours is a heavy narrow boat and creates considerable disturbance on shallow canals even at tickover. Despite trying to be considerate by going passed at tickover, we often get black looks from slack moored boats we pass as they drift back on their ropes and then get accelerated forward only to get bumped again. It's not nice for them or us.

Boats on chains or piling pins may get bumped but should remain moored. Where boats are using mooring pins we find it extremely difficult not to pull them off, and we often drift pass boats in neutral.

We can't leave our boat on mooring pins, it just tears them out of the bank. When mooring on piling or rings **we find triangulating the stern mooring a good solution**. It reduces the boat movement, preventing momentum build-up very effectively.

Cruising speed. I find as long as your your not making a wake along the bank . Your fine. However in extremely windy conditions. Should you be traveling to slowly you will be taken by the wind. And most likely collided with other boat's moored...

Much of what you have researched is reasonable, but when I first came on the canal one of the first things I learned was that limited cruising speed was also there to protect the banks from the wash. You haven't covered this and that more people are travelling at greater than 4 mph on a very regular basis. This includes both private and holiday boaters. I have said before that they also then think that slowing down to 4 mph is an adequate response.

Presumably you know when new boaters come on to the canal by the purchase of the license. **Could there be some sort of competence test introduced?** I know there are companies on the canal who train people for boating, could there be a competence certificate required. I don't think this would completely solve the problem, but it would make more new boaters aware. I also do alot with the equine world where there are facilities for competence certificates, admittedly they are not always used, but where they are the more people who take them up mean the more people available to pass that education on.

One of the problems currently is that old time boaters who have been on the canal for many many years are sadly dying off and there are less people to educate the more.

I had an interesting "event" recently. On the Coventry canal just past Stretton stop, there is a long section of permanent moorings which I slowed down to pass. During this time a share boat caught up and by the time I was clear to speed was about 50 yards behind. Although I increased speed it was still restricted by the shallow water and the boat behind caught up further and indicated he wanted to pass. However the canal was there is narrow due to weeds either side so I continued at normal speed to clear the narrow section so he could then pass. This was obviously not what the other boat had in mind as he continued to catch up (creating large waves) and forced his way through regardless, causing us to ground our boat in the weeds. I don't feel that I was in any way going too slow, but was left both bemused and confused by this behaviour.

I believe that a definitive set of rules would work for all boaters.

Tick over from two boat lengths before and after moored boats.

Keep it "Simple Stupid". 😊

Part of the answer of moored boats suffering from too fast passing boats is in the hands of CRT.

When BW were in charge they had as a target to reduce linear moorings such as the one at Thrupp on the south Oxford. Passing such a long line of moored boats plus the possibly delays in meeting oncoming traffic with limited clearance is likely to make the steerer a bit frustrated and feel that they are not making any progress and consequentially run faster than tickover. Unfortunately BW didn't make any progress and in fact they allowed new linear moorings to increase. CRT is still allowing this to happen so may I suggest that they control an area where boats start to gather and stop it becoming a permanent mooring.

Just a thought, thanks for listening.

I have been reading your commentary on speed with some interest. The speed one chooses has to balance the potential disturbance of moored craft with the ability to navigate safely. I cruise only on rivers, and going upstream on the non-tidal Severn at tick-over means I would almost certainly be going backwards before I knew it. So the balancing item is being able to maintain steerage way and thus be able to control one's boat safely. My boat ticks over at 700 rpm. I will be going upstream at a minimum of 1100, and downstream I am ok at 1000. I have not seen this point made in any of your writings.

Getting close on 50 years experience now and have been guilty in my early days of not slowing down enough (I'm better now, honest!). This reminder comes at an appropriate time as we've just completed a busy 10 days' cruise from Braunston to Burton on Trent via some of the BCN's various loops.

We have seen threadbare boats at speed passing us when moored. We have seen hirers and both experienced and inexperienced owners do the same. We have also seen others commanding all types of boat, passing sociably. The point here is that it's mainly a consideration "thing", not necessarily an experience or an education "thing".

However, it is tiresome in the extreme to encounter mile after mile of bank-moored craft, some near derelict, some threadbare, but most carefully looked after and licensed; all of which require passing at tickover. No one wants to hammer along at 5mph (though some try to) but to maintain a speed of 3mph the majority of the time would be nice. I believe it's an impatience engendered by the experience of those endless furlongs of moored craft that fuels the need to pass any boat at cruising speed. Along with those speeding because of an unfortunately antisocial nature, it adds up to a lot of boats providing discomfort for others.

Does that help? I suspect not, but at least it might help explain a few of the reasons. How a cure is found and enforced is absolutely beyond me! Maybe we turn it on its head and tell those moored against the bank in long lines to use sea-going fenders and springs as a matter of course, and to treat it as a seaway experience.

My experience of the waterways is that as a generality the majority of hire boats go out of their way to 'get things right' when it comes to doing most things and this must be a reflection of the **good handover process of the hire companies**. The most frequent 'offenders' are owners who perhaps have forgotten or don't care. I'm certainly not going to say that I have always got it right and sometimes a simple lapse in concentration and coming across an obscured moored boat catches me out! The biggest problem is where there are obviously a line of moored boats and what seems to be a total disregard to speed. Your article refers to the affect of passing moored craft at speed on mooring lines but does not mention that it can also cause accidents in the galley if people are cooking, having a shower and is really annoying if you are just to touch up the paint on that scratch you've been wanting to do for weeks.

Perhaps it's even more basic than that! Maybe it's just thinking about others and the impact we have on others around us! Something which doesn't always happen these days! I would question whether there is anything important enough that couldn't wait the supposed 'lost' minutes that speeding past boats saves! A bit like the car that rushes past you in a tearing hurry and is then two cars in front of you at next set of traffic lights!

I know that mooring rope angles get talked about as well! Personally I like 45 degrees but that just what I learnt years ago – does it make any difference – I don't know. It's not always practical with mooring rings any way! Tight or loosely tied? It's certainly not always safe to moor too tight! It seems to me that this is just a deflection from the fact that the passing boat was going too fast.

So nothing radical – think of others – think about our impact on others – slow down – enjoy the friendly wave from the kitchen window of the moored boat or raised glass from the towpath as you drift past!

Look forward to hearing what others have to say.

With reference to your request for comments about boat speeds, my wife and I have been out more-or-less continuously since mid-July and were very pleased to observe that, for the first two or three weeks, speeding past our moored boat was rare - perhaps once or twice per day. Since then its incidence has increased steadily, partly, no doubt, because there are simply more boats moving, until yesterday in Middlewich, boats which didn't speed were rare - no more than 4 or 5 out of a couple of dozen. And it wasn't just hire boats.

I'm at great Haywood at the moment, and **the speed of boats is absolutely ridiculous.**

I have been hit twice, and the trading boat, two boats up on the junction has been hit five times.

There was also a collision on the junction, whereas a boat coming off the Staffs and Worcs Canal came out at pace, and ploughed into a passing boat, there was no horn indication that they were coming out onto a main system,, There must have been around 30 plus boats travelling through today, and I would say on two gave an indication on there horn, one was coming off the Staffs and Worcs, the other turning onto it.

The most amazing thing though was seeing a member of staff from a boat hire company taking out a boat, with new hirers onboard straight into the main stream, no signals, and at full speed, didn't even have anyone to see if he was clear. So, if they are doing it what hope have we got?

As a now a non-boat owner living in a property that backs directly onto the Trent and Mersey Canal in Staffordshire. I would advise that the speed of some craft coming through this canal section is unbelievably high - both private boaters and hire boat crews are equally culpable leading to canal bank erosion. The amount of craft passing through with excess speed and followed by waves of eroding water is becoming more and m

It is my belief that significant action needs to be undertaken by the Canal and River Trust as continuation of this practice is going to severely undermine the integrity of the canal banks leading to unnecessary and unwanted cost to both private property holders responsible for canal bank boundaries at the waters edges and the Canal and River Trust with its numerous miles of natural canal bank perimeters.

I would urge that this unsocial practice be got to grips with by the relevant authorities and educate and fine where necessary the offending parties.
