



Canal &
River Trust



Liverpool Canal Link Skipper's Guide





The Leeds & Liverpool Canal was authorised in 1770 and constructed in sections until the main line, delayed by the wars with France, was complete by 1816. At this time the canal terminus in Liverpool was near Old Leeds Street and consisted of a basin several metres away from and above the nearest docks which were George's Dock and Basin. These led to the construction of the South Docks of Albert, Salthouse and others further up the river. Due to there being no direct connection between the canal and docks, transhipment of goods from docks to canal and vice versa was a laborious and inefficient task.

During development on the Central Docks north down the River Mersey estuary in the mid-1800s, a flight of four locks was constructed at Stanley Lock Flight to carry canal vessels down to the docks and entered the dock system through Stanley, Collingwood and Salisbury Docks. Here a barge lock was constructed to allow vessels to enter the river.

In 1981, as the result of a governmental initiative, Merseyside Development Corporation was established with a brief to revitalise the South Docks area, attracting inward investment, business and visitors.

In 2003, ownership of the South Docks waterspace was transferred to British Waterways who had, and still have, exciting plans for the further development of the waterspace as a vibrant destination for visiting ships, pleasure boats and inland waterways craft as well as a water recreation amenity for Liverpool and the surround area.

In 2012, British Waterways became Canal & River Trust.

The Liverpool Canal Link (LCL) provides a navigable route from the bottom of the existing Stanley Lock Flight on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal to Liverpool's South Docks.

Funding for the Project was secured from the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA), the Merseyside Objective One programme (European Regional Development Fund), English Partnerships, Peel Holdings and British Waterways.

The construction of the LCL was split into four contracts and orders placed with three different construction companies; Pierse Construction Ltd; Balfour Beatty plc and HGB Construction Ltd under contract from Countryside Neptune. The construction was managed by British Waterways.

British Waterways negotiated a 'right of passage' through Liverpool Central Docks with the Dock owners.

The Canal & River Trust is now responsible for the ongoing operation of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal (L&L), Liverpool Canal Link (LCL) and Liverpool South Docks. For further information please contact them on the numbers at the back of this document.



LOCATION

- 1.1 The Liverpool Canal Link (LCL) starts at the Stanley Lock Flight & Dock as you exit Stanley Bottom Lock (Lock 4) on the Stanley Flight.
- 1.2 Maps of the LCL are located on page 8 of this guide.

OPERATION

- 2.1 Navigation on the LCL is limited with only 6 boats coming into Liverpool and 6 boats out every day with the exception of Tuesdays.
- 2.2 The L&L and the LCL can accommodate full length wide beam boats. See dimensions at the end of this document.
- 2.3 Bridge 9, Hancock's Swing Bridge and Bridge 6, Netherton Swing Bridge on the L&L shall only be operated by The Trust's Staff. These bridges are only operated between 9:30 to 10:30 and 13:00 to 14:00 daily including Tuesdays.
- 2.4 Stanley Flight Locks and Prince's Lock can be operated with assistance. Mann Island Lock on the LCL can only be operated by The Trust's staff.
- 2.5 Access to the South Docks may be restricted because of poor weather conditions or if Canning River Entrance is in use by sea-going vessels around tide times.
- 2.6 Boats wanting to enter the docks may be required to moor in Mann Island Basin until informed it is safe to proceed.
- 2.7 Please be at the top of the Stanley Flight on the date and time on your 'Confirmation of Booking' letter.
- 2.8 Whilst on the L&L and the LCL, customers will be required to comply with the Canal & River Trust terms & conditions and abide by their regulations and bylaws.
- 2.9 Whilst in Stanley Dock customers will be required to comply with Kitgrove Ltd Dock Rules and terms & conditions.
- 2.10 Whilst in Collingwood, Salisbury, Trafalgar, West Waterloo, Prince's Half Tide and Prince's Dock customers will be required to comply with Peel Ports Dock Rules and terms and conditions.
- 2.11 Whilst in the Liverpool South Docks, customers will be required to comply with The Trust Dock Rules and terms and conditions.
- 2.12 **Peel Ports, Kitgrove Ltd and The Trust reserve the right to close their waterways and docks at any time and without reason.**

SAFETY

- 3.1 It is important that boaters are familiar with the boat-handling and safety information given in 'The Boaters Handbook' and the information in this 'Skippers Guide', both issued by The Trust.
- 3.2 Children should wear life jackets while in the Central Docks and South Docks waters. Adults are strongly advised to wear them.
- 3.3 Boats must not stray outside the navigation lanes designated by floating buoys while in the Central Docks.
- 3.4 The water in the docks can be up to 8 metres deep. Dock steps, grab chains and ladders are located in the Central and South Docks and lifebuoys are located around the South Docks. Skippers should make themselves aware of the location of the safety equipment whilst sailing through the docks.



- 3.5** Skippers should be aware that weather conditions can change rapidly in the docks, with the wind creating 'funnels' between buildings and through dock passages often making navigation difficult. Please be aware that many of the docks are large, exposed areas of water and there are many blind corners especially around Dock passages.

EMERGENCIES

- 4.1** For operational emergencies, please contact The Trust Emergency Number: 0800 47 999 47 and supply details of the incident and the location.
- 4.2** For life threatening emergencies please call 999 and supply details of the incident and the location.

TRAVELLING SOUTH ON THE LCL INTO LIVERPOOL DOCKS

- 5.1** The 4 locks that make up the Stanley Flight are operated by the Trust's staff, although assistance from boaters will be most welcome.
- 5.2** Boats should wait until instructed to enter Lock 1 by the Trust's staff.
- 5.3** After passing down Stanley Lock Flight the boats arrive in a basin at the bottom.
- 5.4** Boats may leave the basin and continue their passage on the LCL without waiting for the remainder of the convoy.

Before leaving the Stanley Lock Flight Basin, Skippers should check their boat will pass under Great Howard Street Road Bridge (Bridge AA) and two small bridges on the other side of it. The air draught available can reduce to 2.16m, when the Central Docks water level is high. An air draught marker is installed at the side of the bridge. Skippers are reminded that the passage through to Stanley Dock is not in line with Stanley bottom lock.

TRAVELLING THROUGH LIVERPOOL DOCKS

6.1 STANLEY DOCK

Stanley Dock, together with the other Docks to the west and south of it, is referred to as the Central Docks. The LCL route passes through Stanley Dock with its high wharves and disused warehouses on both sides. Sailing down the Dock, ahead can be seen the Regent Road bascule (Bridge BB) leading into Collingwood Dock. All boats should pass beneath this bridge with care if travelling at high water, as a series of structural transverse beams restricts the air draught.

6.2 COLLINGWOOD DOCK

Once again a dedicated navigation channel, travelling east to west, is marked by floating buoys and boaters must stay within this channel. Boaters should continue to the end of the dock into Salisbury Dock Passage.



6.3 SALISBURY DOCK

Boaters should continue travelling west towards Victoria Clock Tower at the far end of the dock. Halfway down the dock, boaters should turn south (left) into the navigation channel marked by floating buoys leading into Trafalgar Dock Passage.

6.4 CENTRAL DOCKS CHANNEL

Boaters should continue travelling south through the cutting in to what was previously Trafalgar Dock. You will pass the Clarence Graving Dock on the east side (left). The largely straight channel continues through a length of backfilled docks with an existing dock wall on the east side and a side slope to the west. Boaters are advised to keep to the Navigation through a deviation approximately two thirds of the way through is assisted by a localised widening of the channel. The channel leads south into the West Waterloo Dock and then through a passage into Prince's Half Tide Dock. The route crosses Prince's Half Tide Dock and passes beneath Prince's Dock Causeway Bridge (Bridge DD) and enters Prince's Dock itself. Boats navigate the length of the Dock, passing beneath Prince's Dock Footbridge (Bridge EE) and leave via Prince's Dock Lock. Buoys mark a safe channel through Prince's Dock. **While passing beneath Prince's Dock Footbridge (Bridge EE) please ensure that you keep in the centre of the buoyed channel, as there is restricted headroom on the outside of the channel.**

6.5 PRINCE'S DOCK LOCK (LOCK 5)

Prince's Dock Lock (Lock 5) is a traditional broad beam mitre gate with gate sluices. The area is fenced to exclude the public. Mooring bollards are provided on either side of the lock. The drop of the lock varies from 1.31 metres to 0.7 metres depending on the Dock water level.

PIER HEAD TUNNELS AND BASINS

On leaving Prince's Dock Lock boats enter the St Nicholas Tunnel. This is approximately 190 metres long and leads to the Pier Head section of the canal. This section is 6.5 metres wide, curved in the middle and has an allowable draught of 1.2 metres. The water depth is generally 1.5 metres elsewhere. **The tunnels are unlit and on approach to each tunnel, boaters are advised to switch on any headlights/cabin lights.** Both sides of the tunnel are fitted with timber fenders incorporating hand-rails in the fenders. St Nicholas Tunnel leads to Liver Basin. From this basin boaters are able to view the Liver Building. From Liver Basin boats enter Cunard Tunnel. This tunnel is 99 metres long, narrowing to 6.5 metres in width and is unlit. From Cunard Tunnel boats enter Museum Basin. From this basin boaters are able to see the Port of Liverpool Building and the Museum of Liverpool. The canal continues into the Museum Tunnel (88 metres in length), which passes beneath the Museum of Liverpool, and leads to Mann Island Basin and Lock. **Stopping or mooring is not allowed anywhere along this length of canal, except at Prince's Lock. Obviously boats should stop if an emergency arises.** Life buoys are provided in the open waterspaces of this section of canal.



6.6 MANN ISLAND BASIN

Moorings are provided in Mann Island Basin for boats to use while Mann Island Lock is being used or whilst a restriction on lock movements is in place.

6.7 MANN ISLAND LOCK (LOCK 6)

Mann Island Lock (Lock 6) takes you into Canning Dock. This Lock can only be operated by the Trust's staff. There are floodgates fitted to the east end of the Lock that will be closed when the water levels in Canning Dock is higher than in Mann Island Basin. The floodgates are operated by the Trust's staff and are generally left open during operating hours. The area is fenced to exclude the public.

6.8 ENTERING THE SOUTH DOCKS

Proceed out of Mann Island Lock and bear right past two former graving dock entrances. The third passage, adjacent to the Pump House pub, is Canning Dock Passage, travel through here into Canning Half Tide Dock, continue in a westerly direction and after approximately 100 metres turn left and enter Albert Dock via Albert Passage. **Do not enter Albert Passage if the Dock gate is closed, and ensure navigation light is on green before proceeding.**

The air draught below Hartley Bridge is approximately 3 metres. Canning Dock and Canning Half Tide Dock are operational docks and are frequently utilised by sea going vessels, especially around high water times. If the operational docks are in use then passage from the canal link to your berth in Salthouse Dock will be delayed until all marine operations are complete. Once in Albert Dock bear to the left and head for Salthouse Dock Passage, this will give you access to pontoon moorings in Salthouse Dock. Remember when transiting dock passages keep to the right and sound your horn. Also be aware that you may encounter vessels coming in the opposite direction.

VISITOR MOORINGS

7.1 Visitor moorings in Salthouse Dock are for a maximum period of 7 days inclusive. You **must** moor in your allocated berth in Salthouse Dock which is displayed on your booking confirmation. Electricity and water are available on the pontoons. Electricity cards are available from Albert Dock Tourist Information Centre in Anchor Courtyard. Pump out and Elsan disposal can be arranged by phoning Liverpool Marina on 0151 707 6777.

7.2 Visitors wishing to extend their stay in Salthouse Dock for longer than 7 days are advised to contact the Liverpool Canal Link team on 01942 405761 to check availability, a £20 per day charge will apply for all days over 7 days, alternatively you can contact the Harbour side Marina on 0151 707 6777 where visitor berths may be available in Brunswick/Coburg Docks. Residential berths are not permitted anywhere.



SAILING WITHIN THE SOUTH DOCKS

- 8.1** If a boater wishes to sail within the South Docks from their mooring in Salthouse Dock, they **must** inform the Harbour Manager on 0151 709 6558. The South Docks are used by a variety of recreational users including swimming clubs and sub aqua clubs. Liverpool Watersports Centre is located in Queen’s Dock and activities take place on a daily basis. **Restrictions on navigation may be in place during events such as sponsored swims or other water related events.**

LEAVING LIVERPOOL SOUTH DOCKS FOR THE RETURN TRIP TO THE L&L CANAL

- 9.1** Boats should be ready to leave their mooring in Salthouse Dock at the time given on their ‘Confirmation of Booking’ letter, normally 08:00 am.
- 9.2** At the allocated time please make your way into Albert Dock, through Albert Passage and turning right into Canning Half Tide Dock and into Canning Dock.
- 9.3** Once in Canning Dock, the Trust’s staff will tell you when to enter Mann Island Lock.
- 9.4** Mann Island Lock is operated by the Trust’s staff.
- 9.5** Once at Prince’s Dock Lock, the Trust’s staff will tell you when it is safe to enter.
- 9.6** On leaving Prince’s Dock Lock proceed through the Central Docks Channel towards Salisbury Dock (Salisbury Dock is easily identified as there is a large clock on the western side), turn right into Collingwood Dock and proceed towards Stanley Dock.
- 9.7** On entering Stanley Dock proceed towards Stanley Basin, remember the air draught beneath Great Howard Street Road Bridge can be as little as 2.16m, if the central dock water level is high.
- 9.8** The Trust’s Staff will tell you when it is safe to enter the Stanley Lock Flight.
- 9.9** Proceed in a northerly direction towards Litherland. At Bridge 6, Netherton Swing Bridge, the Trust’s Staff will operate the bridge. Boaters should not attempt to operate this bridge.
- 9.10** After leaving Bridge 6, travel north towards Bridge 9. The Trust’s Staff will operate this bridge for you. Boaters should not attempt to use this bridge.

DIMENSIONS

MAXIMUM BOAT SIZES			
<i>Liverpool to Wigan and Leigh Branch (including Liverpool Link)</i>			
Length	Beam	Draught	Headroom
72ft	14.3ft	3.94ft	8ft
21.6m	4.29m	1.2m	2.4m
<i>Please note headroom can reduce to 2.16m beneath Great Howard Street Road Bridge if Central Dock water level is high (See Section 7 – Stanley Lock Flight)</i>			

USEFUL NUMBERS

Canal & River Trust – Wigan Office	01942 405761
Canal & River Trust – Liverpool Office	0151 709 6558
Canal & River Trust Emergency Number	0800 47 999 44
Emergency Services	999

