

# USE OF LOCKS ON THE CHELMER & BLACKWATER NAVIGATION

The locks, gates and paddle gear on this navigation are of great historic value. Please treat them with care and respect. Boats passing through locks on the Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation must be licenced for lock usage, and with a person in attendance who has received EWL approved instruction. Only windlasses issued by EWL may be used.

## PLEASE FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY:

Locks are normally left full with top gates open and top paddles half open. This is so the lock remains full even if the top gates become closed. An empty lock with all gates closed becomes a dangerous trap. If a lock has been left empty it is usually because Victoria has passed through, and will soon be returning. Only Victoria may leave locks empty when cruising. All other vessels must stop and refill lock after locking down, unless another vessel is approaching and wishes to lock up.

## WHEN LOCKING DOWN OR UP:

One end of the lock must be fully closed, gates and paddles, at all times. Do not open a paddle until you are sure the other end of the lock is fully closed. Always wind the paddles up and down – do not let them drop as this causes serious damage. Do not force paddles further than they want to go. Always remove the windlass when not actually winding – if the paddle gear slips the windlass could inflict serious injury.

## LOCKING DOWN:

- Open top gates (if necessary) and enter lock.
- Do not tie up or your boat will be left hanging as the water level drops!
- Hold lines ashore, or pass them round bollards and back to the crew aboard.
- Close the top gates ensuring a good fit at the mitre (the chamfered edge of the gate).
- Close the top paddles fully.
- Open bottom paddles.
- If there is another boat below, this must be done gradually to avoid turbulence.
- The water level will fall.
- Keep boat well clear of the sill or ledge below the top gates.
- When the level has fallen, open the bottom gates.
- Wind the bottom paddles fully down.
- Take the boat out of the lock and moor up.
- Shut the bottom gates, ensuring a good fit at the mitre.
- Check that bottom paddles are fully down.
- Open the top paddles to allow lock to fill.
- When full, open the top gates (putting down the bracing legs where fitted).
- Leave the top gates open and both top paddles half open (not one paddle fully open).

## LOCKING UP:

Remember, when locking down your boat is on smooth water. When locking up your boat is on turbulent water, and must be tied up.

If lock is empty you can take your boat in, but usually the lock will be full, so:

- Tie up securely below lock.
- Shut top gates, ensuring a good fit at the mitre.
- Fully close top paddles.
- Carefully open bottom paddles.
- Be aware this will cause turbulence below lock.
- When lock is empty, open bottom gates.
- Lower bottom paddles fully.
- Bring boat into lock.
- Tie up in lock, as it will become turbulent.
- Tighten lines as boat rises.
- Close bottom gates, ensuring a good fit at the mitre.
- Check bottom paddles are fully closed.
- Carefully and gradually open top paddles.
- Be aware that gate paddles create a waterfall effect which could swamp a boat.
- Ground paddles do not present this hazard, but can still cause turbulence.
- When water has risen sufficiently, open top gates.
- Lower top paddles to half way.
- Put gate 'legs' down where fitted.
- Take boat out, leaving lock full with top gates open and top paddles half open.

## NAVIGATION NOTES:

- **Speed Limit 4 miles per hour - Do not cause a wash**
- **Navigate on the right when approaching other vessels**
- **Navigate in daylight hours only**
- **Beware of weirs**
- **Do not navigate in flood conditions**

For further information or instruction please call:  
☎ 07910 558465

Vessels navigating on the Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation must have a minimum of third party insurance, and (unless not venturing above Hall Bridge) a valid Boat Safety Certificate.