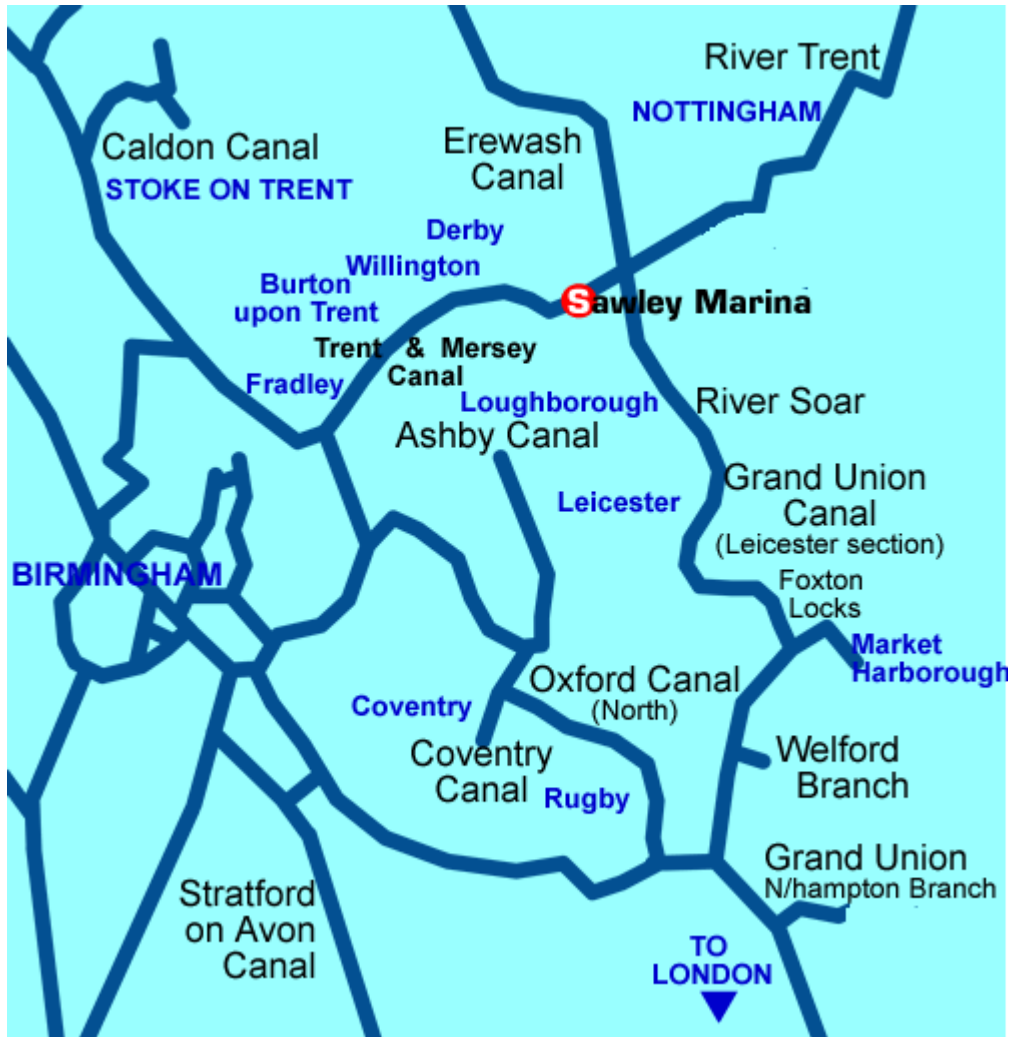




NOTES ON CRUISING FROM SAWLEY MARINA



CRUISING WEST

This is the main recommended route for our visitors.



A short river section takes you to **Derwent Mouth**, and the entrance to the **Trent & Mersey** canal.

Within an hour or so of departure, you arrive at **Shardlow**. This is an attractive canal village with a restaurant and a number of Canalside Pubs, including the **Navigation Inn** (Tel 01332-792918) by Bridge 3,

a haunted pub with moorings. Also near the Canal is the **Old Crown** (01332-792392).

This is a good place for the first night's mooring. There is a **Heritage Centre** where you can gain an insight to canal life from the early 18th century, near Shardlow Lock, as you leave the village. If you feel like a stroll around the village then try the village trail.

Everywhere, there are examples of large-scale canal architecture. By the Shardlow lock is the biggest and best of these buildings- the 18th century Trent Mill, now the Clock Warehouse, an attractive eating and drinking establishment.

Passing **Weston on Trent** on your right hand side, near Weston Lock, there is a pleasant walk south east down the lane from the lock to the river opposite **Kings Mills**. In the village, there are a couple of pubs with restaurants.

Soon, you will come to the small villages of **Swarkestone & Barrow-on-Trent** off to the left.

The **Crew & Harpur Arms** at Swarkstone is near the river bridge, The **Ragley Boat Stop** Pub is a large pub 300yds west of Bridge 17 (tel 0132-703919)

There is a good pub alongside the **Stenson Lock & Marina**, about hour before you get to **Willington**, '**The Bubble Inn**' (Tel 01283-703113). Moor up at bridge 19 for a pub full of character, it even has a ghost of an old lock keeper!!!

The next main village is **Willington**, about 5 hours cruising from Shardlow. This has an open village green area and pubs, shops and a Post Office. The **Green Dragon** is a popular & welcoming pub with low beams & moorings (Tel 01283-702327) .

A 12 arch stone aqueduct carries the canal over the **River Dove**.

At Bridge 29a you will find The **Mill House Bar** with its own moorings and large canal side terrace. Children welcome and they have a family dining area and inside and outside play areas.



Stop off at the **Horninglow Basin** for some fish and chips.

In another 2 hours, you will arrive at **Burton-on-Trent**. Traditionally associated with the brewing industry, it is internationally known as the brewing capital of Great Britain. The previous section of the canal has double-width locks, but once you reach **Dallow Lane Lock**, you will reach the first of the narrow locks which only have a capacity for one boat at a time.

You can visit the **Bass Museum** or **Heritage Brewery Museum** here: www.bass-museum.com

Coors Visitor Centre is $\frac{3}{4}$ miles from Horninglow Basin. here you can see all aspects of brewing during the late 19th Century, also a preserved steam engine, cafe & shops, also conducted tours round the Brewery.

Marstons Brewery Visitor Centre (tel 01283-507391) Tours of the brewery include the unique and world famous Burton Union system are generally available Monday to Friday. At the end of the tour, have a drink of real ale in the Visitor Centre. Please telephone in advance to book if you want to visit Marstons.

There are numerous pubs near the canal including. **The Navigation Inn** (with moorings) (Tel 01283 568977).

If you are only having a short break with us, Burton on Trent can, in the main, be comfortably reached, leaving enough time for your return journey. There are 2 turning points at Burton-on-Trent, one at **Horninglow Wharf**, the other at **Shobnall Marina**. We do not recommend that you moor here so if you are here for a short break, you may want to turn around and head back towards Willington, or if you have made good headway or are staying for a week, you can push on to **Branston**, which is a good spot for an overnight stay. This is just over an hour or so from Burton-on-Trent.

At Branston (as in pickles!!) you can moor near **Bridge Inn**, (Tel 01283-564177) at Bridge 34, which has good food and real ales. There is also a seasonal shop selling provisions, home made cakes & crafts.

Nearby is the **Branston Water Park**, with several walks around the ponds and lakes formed from old gravel pits. There is a small 'Visitor Centre' a short walk from the towpath.



Another 3 hours cruising from Branston brings you to **Alrewas**, a large, attractive village with shops and pubs and worth a stroll around.

The canal's meandering passage through the village, passing well tended gardens and a bowling green, and the presence of the 13th century church create a friendly and unruffled atmosphere. The back lanes harbour pretty half timbered thatched cottages. There is a fine Butchers here, also well worth a visit is a fantastic wine & whisky store – **Barkers of Alrewas**, which holds hundreds of different bottles of Scotch amongst its stock.

Good pubs are the **Crown Inn** near bridge 46 & **George & Dragon** in the village.

A further 3 hours or so cruising brings you to **Fradley Junction**, where the **Trent & Mersey** meets the **Coventry Canal**. Stay for a while at **The Swan Pub** situated on one of the most picturesque waterside locations in the Midlands. Try and spot some of the wildlife to be found here including kingfishers, herons and moorhens. Visit the shop and information centre for souvenirs. Fradley Junction can be comfortably reached in 3 days cruising from Sawley, generally giving plenty of time for the return journey. Visit the

Fradley Pool nature reserve and have a go at pond dipping or view the abundance of birdlife from the bird-hide. For the more energetic, pick up a map and guide and try one of the wonderful walks - listen en-route for the Green Woodpeckers

For those who like to spend long days cruising, and who are able to reach Fradley Junction in a shorter time, there is a choice. The Coventry Canal has no locks for some miles from Fradley Junction. **The Plough** at **Heddlesford Junction** is worth a visit. You then go into **Whittington** and may even reach **Hopwaas**, just south of Tamworth.

If you carry on along the Trent & Mersey, around 3 hours cruising will bring you into **Rugeley**, a town with lots of facilities. If you have enough time before you have to turn around for the return journey, you may get as far as **Great Haywood**, 2 hours from Rugeley. This is the junction with the **Staffs & Worcester Canal**.

The Canal borders the grounds of **Shugborough Hall**, the home of the late Patrick Lichfield. The house & grounds are open from March to October 11-5pm. The house is an 18th Century mansion, and has magnificent grounds.



CRUISING EAST

Travelling to the east of Sawley, you can cruise as far as **Nottingham**. The river is tidal beyond this point and our boats are not equipped for these conditions, nor are we covered by insurance Nottingham city centre is about four hours cruising from Sawley.

It takes less than an hour to get to Trent Lock, where the **River Trent** meets the **River Soar** and the **Erewash canal**.

The **Navigation Inn** and **Steamboat Inn** are located canalside, as are the Lockhouse tearooms.

Once through the **Cranfleet Lock**, you will **pass Attenborough Nature Reserve** on your left. This consists of 145 hectares of flooded gravel pits and islands, the ideal habitat for a range of birdlife, plants and other wildlife.

Around 90 minutes cruising on the wide River Trent from Cranfleet Lock brings you to **Beeston Lock** and the entrance to the Trent & Mersey canal section of Beeston Cut.

Watch out for the large arrow signs warning to keep you away from unnavigable sections of the river.

Take care to keep left of the entrance to the Canal, giving the weir to your right a very wide berth. Get through the lock and there are moorings to your left. Once tied up safely, you can walk across the bridge to view the weir and river which sweeps away to the south of the Canal.

There is a bar in the nearby **Marina Club**, overlooking the river, or a short walk into Beeston will bring you to the '**Boat and Horses**' in Trent Road (2nd road on the left walking back from the lock, then 1st right).

Another hour and a half or so of cruising will bring you into Nottingham. It is recommended that you moor near **Castle Marina** for any overnight stays. Make sure that your narrow boat is fully secure before a short walk canalside brings you to the Castle Lock, where you can leave the canal and walk up the hill to the city centre.

Nottingham Centre has many attractions, such as the Castle and museum, the City of Caves, and the Galleries of Justice, all within 10 minutes walking distance of each other: -

Nottingham Castle – A great place for the younger members of the family with interactive displays and especially for the under fives a medieval style playground and picnic area You could also visit 'Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem', reputedly the world's oldest pub!!!



City of Caves – explore the world underneath Nottingham in these man-made caves. Discover how these caves have been used for centuries by the local people – www.cityofcaves.com

The Galleries of Justice – join the crime and punishment tour and witness a trial in the Victorian courtroom. Experience a Victorian adventure and become one of the children who lived in Narrow Marsh - www.galleriesofjustice.org.uk

Nottingham has been voted one of the best shopping destinations in the country. The city centre is easy to get around on foot and there are numerous restaurants and bars. Visit the **Broadmarsh Centre** and the **Victoria Centre** for a shopping marathon.

RIVER SOAR

This is reached by Cruising East towards Nottingham & then at the very busy Trent Lock, go South on the River Soar. Please be aware that cruising may be restricted especially in times of flooding or if inclement weather conditions are forecast.

Boaters are reminded that this is basically a River navigation liable to flooding in wet weather. There are red flood warning lights along the River Soar.

Boats negotiating the junction of the rivers Soar & Trent should keep well away from **Thrumpton Weir**, which is just downstream of the big iron railway bridge.

The River, a tributary of the River Trent, is about 40 miles long and meanders down to **Loughborough**, with a few villages & pubs on the way.

After 9 miles you will reach Loughborough, and the **Loughborough Navigation** becomes the **Leicester navigation**, and the start of the **Grand Union Canal**.

The Canal continues on to **Mountsorrel**, with its nice waterside pub, and then to the large city of **Leicester**.

The River Trent to Leicester West Bridge is a 25 mile journey and 25 miles back.

From Leicester down to the Market Harborough Arm is another 18 miles, a total of 43 miles.

That is 86 miles there and back, or about 30+ cruising hours, so you might want to turn around here & head back to Sawley!!!

EREWASH CANAL

This is reached by going north from the Trent Lock, and is nearly 12 miles long. As you enter the Trent lock you will be greeted by a curious selection of house boats.

Visit **The Steamboat Inn** set in the idyllic spot beside the Erewash. Boaters, children, walkers and dogs are all welcome and home cooked food is served daily. The northernmost section of the Erewash canal is more isolated than the rest, and is definitely more rural and attractive. Seek advice from the friendly Hire a Canalboat reception staff before heading onto the Erewash as conditions can vary.



We sincerely hope that these notes are of use to you and we do hope to welcome you in the near future.

