



CALEY CRUISERS

BOATING GUIDE

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO HELP YOU ON YOUR HOLIDAY



Boats going west on Loch Oich



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Welcome to the Caley Cruiser Boating Guide

To help you along the way, we have prepared this guide. Please take the time to ensure that everyone on board reads the important safety information inside. Should you require to contact us for any reason during your holiday, eg to request a Service Engineer or for weather advice, please use the contact numbers below.

Caley Cruisers 24 hour service number - 01463 236402

In all cases please ring the above telephone number first. This is received as a priority number in the office, which is manned as follows:

Friday, Saturday, Tuesday & Wednesday 08:00 to 16:00

Thursday 11:00 to 17:00

During out of office hours, the 24Hour service number is diverted to the call out engineer on duty.

Caley Cruisers Service Engineer - 07836 584 149

Return Journey

We hope you have a wonderful holiday and please remember to return your vessel in a clean and tidy condition by 08:30 hours in the morning on the last day of hire. Please remove linen and place the sheets and towels in the bags provided. If you wish to return to the boatyard the evening prior, you are welcome to use our free toilet, shower facilities and electrical hook-up.

Unfortunately, due to the return time, it is not possible for you to spend the final night on Loch Ness.

If you prefer not to return to the boatyard, there are 2 options for you to berth for the final night: at the **east side** of Dochgarroch Lock or at Torvean & Tomnahurich Bridge, depending on the canal operating times. If in doubt please call us for advice.

When planing your return journey to the boatyard, it is important to remember the canal operating times for bridges and locks and to **allow plenty of time to get there, approximately one hour before closure time**. This allows for additional boat traffic movement and the Canal staff end of day checks.

Scottish Canals - Caledonian Canal Operating times (7 days):

(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

End of March to end of May: 08:30-17:30

End of May to end of August: 08:00-18:00

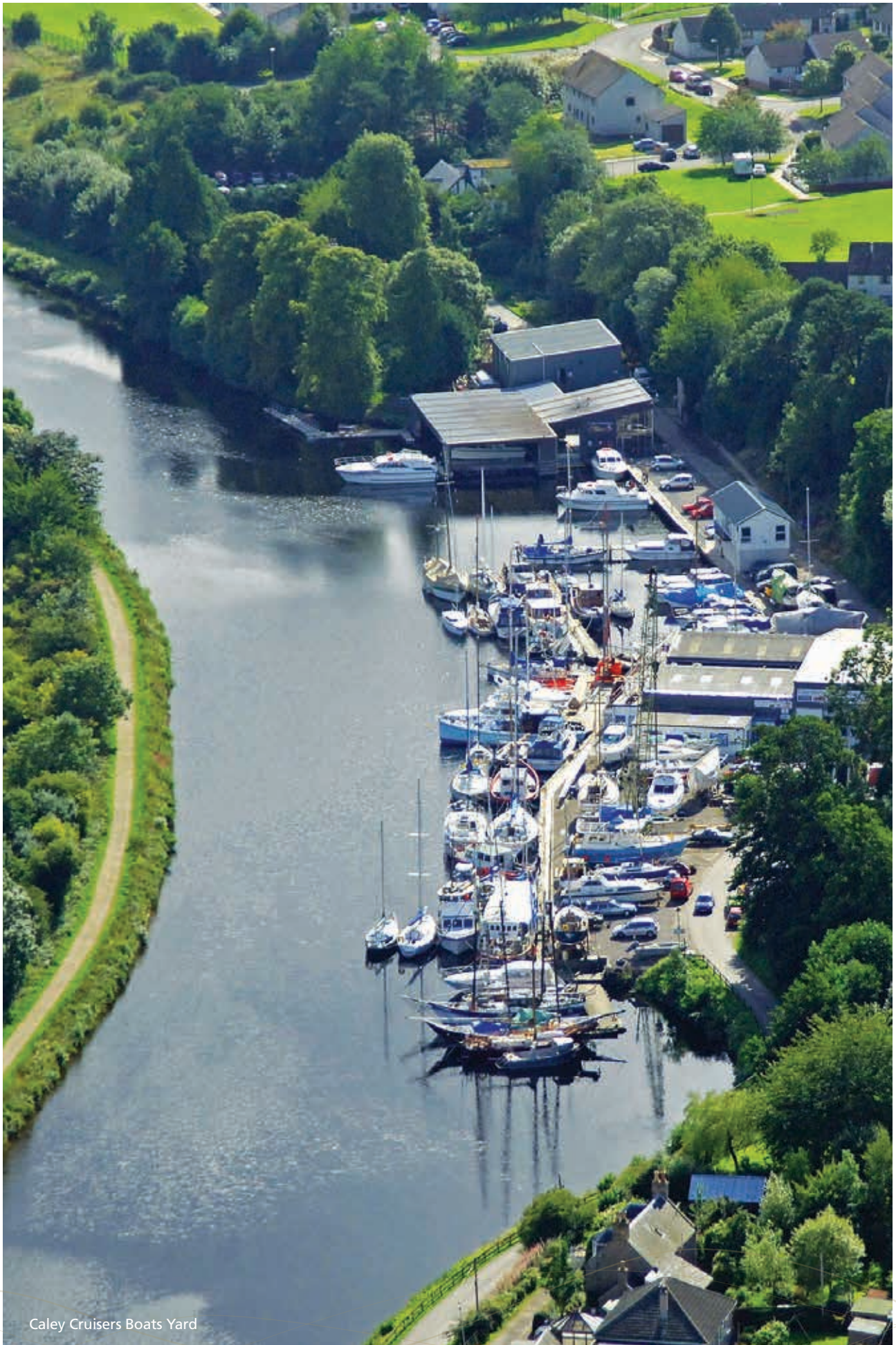
September to end of season: 08:30-17:30

Closed daily for a 1 hour lunch break sometime between 12:00 - 14:00, depending on Canal traffic.

Torvean & Tomnahurich Swing bridges near the Caley Cruisers Boat Yard has a fixed time for lunch 12:00 to 13:15

The **swing bridge** at the bottom of the **Fort Augustus** lock flight will not open for Canal traffic during the following times: 08:20 – 09:00 during school term and 08:40 – 09:00 during school holidays (also applicable Mon-Fri only).

Scottish Canals, Caledonian Canal Office, Seaport Marina, Inverness: 01463 725 500



Caley Cruisers Boats Yard

Section 1 - Navigation & Area Information

Caledonian Canal Hours of Operation

(Subject to changes)

Open 7 days throughout the operating season

End of March to end of May 08:30 – 17:30

End of May to end of August 08:00 – 18:00

September to end of season 08:30 – 17:30

Inverness

Caley Cruisers Boatyard (IV3 8NF)

You are welcome to return to the boatyard at any time during your holiday. **Our changeover days are Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Friday and Saturday, so the yard does get quite busy for berthing between 12:00 & 15:00 hrs on these days.**

You can access your car and depart at any time outwith our opening hours. We will refuel your boat following your departure and email you to advise what the cost of fuel is.

Facilities

Toilet & Shower facilities are available at the boatyard, the code is 1354 to gain entry. Free Wifi is available (Cruisers) and the password is ccwireless.

Water and power are also available free of charge.

There are plenty more restaurants, pubs and cafés located in the city centre, which is about 1.5 miles or 30 min. walk from the boat yard. The best walking route is to cross the top lock on Muirtown flight, follow Fairfield Road to the end, then onto Greig Street and across the river into the town centre (See route on map P8-9).





Lighthouse near Gairloch



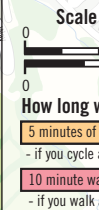
Hotels with Restaurants

- 1 Beaufort Hotel (C3)
- 2 Chieftain Hotel (D4)
- 3 Columba Hotel (H1)
- 4 Corriegarth Hotel (D3)
- 5 Craigmonie Hotel (D3)
- 6 Crown Court Hotel (D3)
- 7 Culloden House Hotel (J5)
- 8 Glenmoriston Town House (C3)
- 9 Heathmount Hotel (D3)
- 10 Jurys Inn (E4)
- 11 Kingsmills Hotel & Spa (D3)
- 12 Lochardil House Hotel (C1)
- 13 Palace Hotel & Spa (H1)
- 14 Premier Inn, Inverness Centre (H1)
- 15 Premier Inn, Inverness East (E3)
- 16 Premier Inn, Millburn Road (D4)
- 17 Premier Inn, Inverness West (B2)
- 18 Redcliffe Hotel (J1)
- 19 Rocpool Reserve & Chez Roux (C3)
- 20 The New Drumossie Hotel (G1)

Restaurant

- 1 Burger King (F4)
- 2 Café Ness by the Cathedral (H)
- 3 Castle Tavern (H1)
- 4 Costa, Inshes (E3)
- 5 Dows Bar & Bistro (D2)
- 6 Fairways Leisure (D1)
- 7 Frankie and Benny's (F4)
- 8 Tesco Café (F4)
- 9 KFC (E4)
- 10 Lorimers (C4)
- 11 McDonald's (Inshes) (E2)
- 12 MacGregors Bar (H2)
- 13 Nando's (F4)
- 14 Nicky Tam's at Glen Mhor (C3)

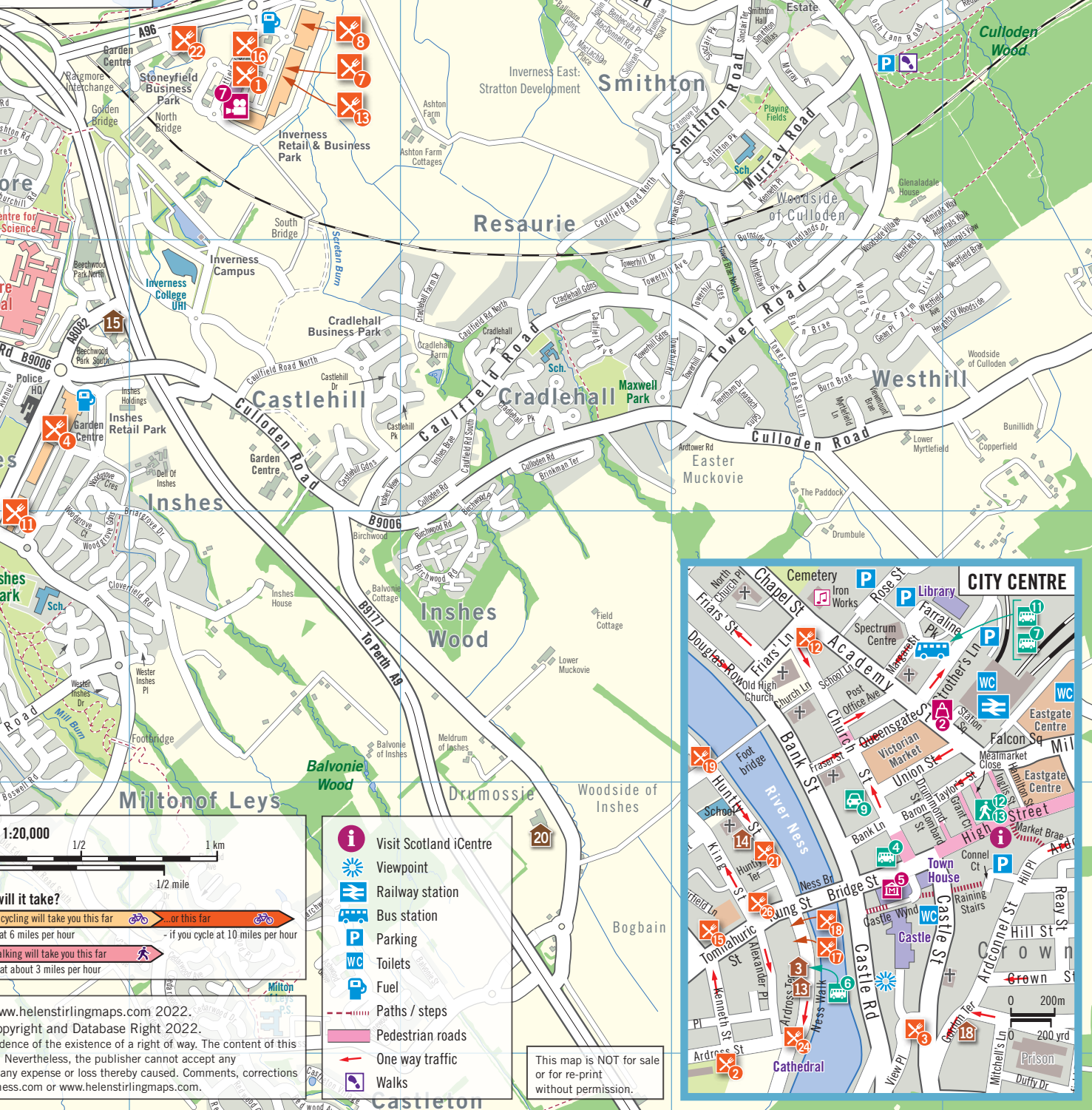
For more restaurants please go to:



Produced by Visit Inverness Loch Ness. © Crown Copyright. Contains Ordnance Survey Data. © Crown Copyright. The representation of a road, track or path is not evidence of a right of way. The map is believed to be correct at the time of printing. Responsibility for errors, omissions or changes or for updates are welcome at www.visitinvernesslochness.com

Golf Course

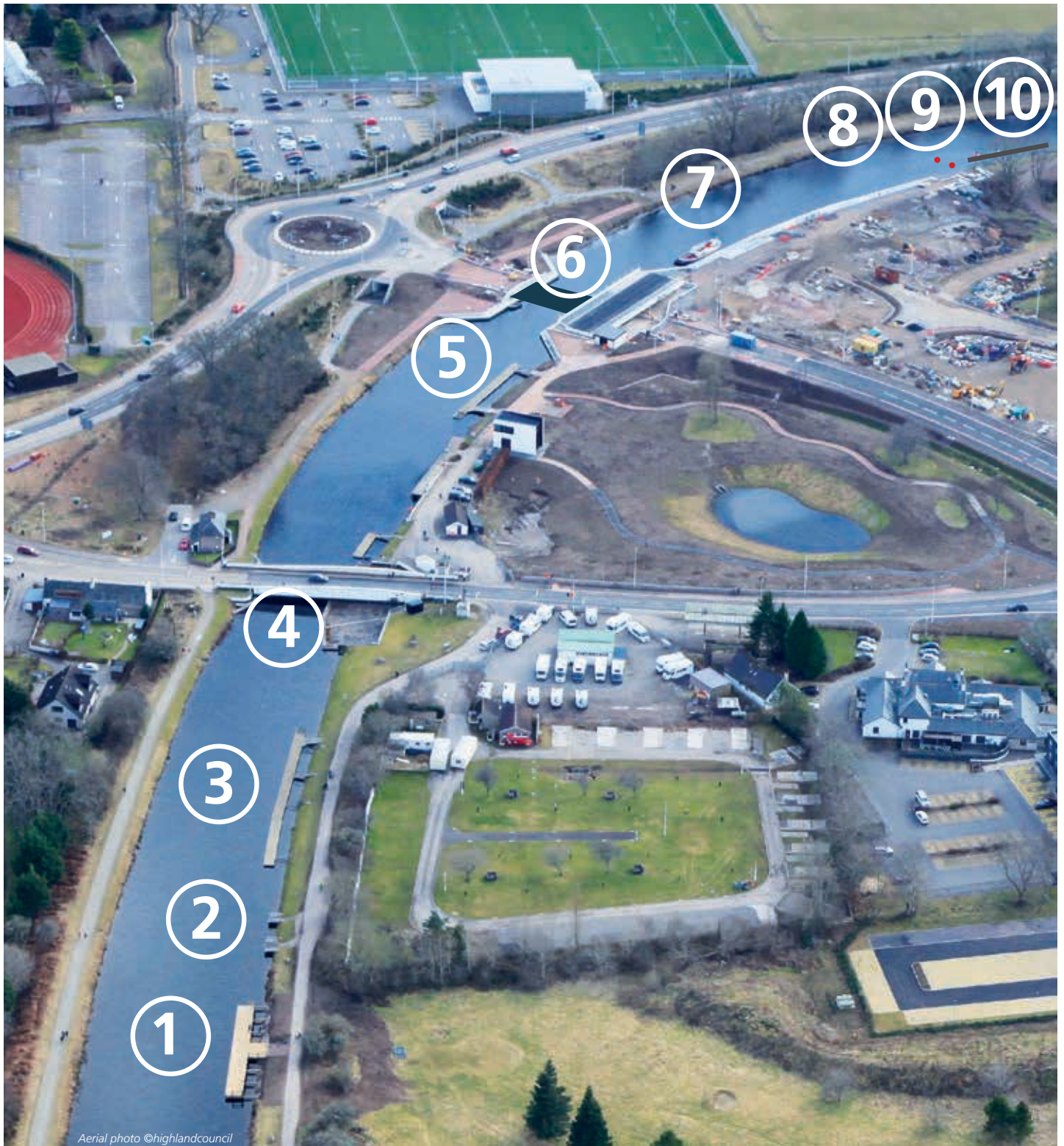
- 1 Inverness Golf Club (**E3**)
- 2 Kings Club Golf Course (**A2**)
- 3 Loch Ness Golf Course (**D1**)



This map is NOT for sale
or for re-print
without permission.

Tomnahurich & Torvean Swing Bridges

(Follow the numbering 1-10 on the aerial photo, details opposite)



Aerial photo ©highlandcouncil

1. **Commercial Wharf.** When Approaching Tomnahurich Bridge, which is approximately ten minutes after leaving the Caley Cruisers Yard, you see there is a new commercial wharf built, that will be on your starboard side. These are for large commercial vessels. **Please do not berth on the wharf**, eg overnight, **unless you have received permission** from the bridge keeper, at the Control Tower. (See note on Aerial Picture)
2. **Small Private Pontoons.** After the commercial wharf there are two small pontoons, **please do not berth** on these pontoons, as they are for the exclusive, private use of the charity boat, "Highland Seagull".
3. **Transit Pontoons.** There are lower, floating pontoons before the bridge, that are used for boats in transit, waiting for the bridge. If you do wish to **moor up overnight** on these pontoons, please seek **permission** from the bridge keeper.
4. **Tomnahurich Bridge.** When the Tom Bridge starts the process to open, you will first hear alarm bells and flashing lights. The bridge is now closing to road traffic and will slowly begin to open to boat traffic. **Its important** that you are **approximately 3 boat lengths** away from the bridge (as it swings towards you) and are positioned over to starboard, rather than in the middle of the canal.

The middle passage between the two bridges, operates as **"one way traffic"** only. The general rule is, when the bridge **fully swings**, and you can see vessels in the middle section (5) in the arial picture, they will be **heading towards you**. They will have the right of way and you **will have to wait**, until all the boats have passed through (passing port to port) the bridge, **before entering**.
5. **Middle Section.** Please progress through **Tomnahurich Bridge** in a timely fashion, one at a time, remember there is a time limit, for how long the bridge can stay open, to boat traffic. Once you have cleared the bridge and are in the middle section, (where the White Bridge Control Tower is located). Please tie up alongside the long floating pontoon. The wait time should be about 10 minutes.
6. **Torvean Bridge.** Again, you will hear and see and adopt the same procedure for going through Torvean Bridge. The bridge will **swing away from you**, so keep approx. **3 boats lengths away**. Only when **fully open**, should you progress through the centre of the bridge. Remember you will have right away. If there are any vessels waiting outside the bridge, please keep clear and pass port to port.
7. **Commercial Wharf.** Immediately after Torvean Bridge on your starboard side, there is a large commercial wharf, that is the berthing place for MV "Jacobite Queen". She operates regularly throughout the day from this wharf, therefore be on the alert for her maneuvering and turning around. Keep well clear.
8. **Lower Concrete Wharf.** Immediately along from the commercial wharf, is the lower concrete wharf. This wharf can be used to moor up on your return, when you approach the bridge from the west.
9. **Two red marker Buoys.** If you were on this wharf and are departing to Dochgarroch, please remember when exiting to pass well clear of the two red marker buoys. The buoys are there because of shallow water, be aware. Like-wise, when you are approaching from Dochgarroch to this lower wharf at Torvean Bridge, do not pass through the two buoys, keep well clear. (See pic)
10. **Rowing Club.** Close to the two red marker buoys is a low-lying pontoon. This pontoon **should not be used for berthing**, this pontoon is for the local rowing club, which is in **regular use**, especially at **weekends**. Please when in this vicinity, or passing rowers kayakers, show some respect, immediately slow your boat right down, (this reduces your wake) and also please give the rowers plenty of space.



Tommnahurich & Torvean Swing Bridges (IV3 5TD)

Tommnahurich Swing Bridge is the first bridge you will pass through after your departure from the boatyard. This bridge needs to be opened for all vessels. The main A82 road route crosses the canal here, so traffic management is of significant importance, therefore try to pass through both bridges when open, in a timely fashion. **Note, you are not allowed to berth on the pontoons between these bridges with the exception of waiting for bridge opening.**

Transit pontoon berthing is available on both sides of the bridge.

Please be aware of and **pay attention to rowing boats and kayaks on the canal.** The Inverness Rowing Club is located shortly after Torvean Bridge on the west side.

Tomnahurich & Torvean Swing Bridges Opening times

There are no longer restrictions in place. One bridge will always be open to boats in transit, apart from a lunch break for 1 hour between the hours of 12.00 & 14:00 .

When planing your return journey to the boatyard, especially when you want to return for the evening, it is important to remember the current canal operating times for bridges and locks at the time of year.

Please **allow plenty of time to get there, approximately one hour before closure time.** This allows for additional boat traffic movement and the Canal staff end of day checks.

Likewise in the morning, **please allow up to 30 minutes for the bridges to open**, this is to allow for the required, pre-opening daily checks.





Dochgarroch Lock (IV3 8JG)



Dochgarroch Lock is the first lock you will go through after your departure from the boatyard. There are considerably more transit berths available on the East side than on the West, so if overnighting here you will usually stay on the East side. If you intend to spend your final night at Dochgarroch, you will need to pass through the lock to the East side before the canal closes for the evening.

Please Note: If you intend to return to the boatyard for your final evening, then you should arrive at Dochgarroch Lock for **15:00hrs**. This will allow you time to lock through Dochgarroch and then pass through Torvean & Tomnahurich Swing bridges.

As you approach Dochgarroch Lock from either direction, you should pass boats moored either side of the lock as slowly as possible to avoid causing damage through the wake of your vessel.

Jacobite Cruises operate large vessels from this pontoon on the West side of Dochgarroch Locks (see Picture above). Be aware, that these two vessels depart and arrive regularly throughout the day. Please give way to them while they are departing / manouvering / arriving to the pontoon.

Facilities

Electricity is available for a small fee - see the lock keeper for a berth with a hook-up connection. Toilet & Shower facilities are available just beside the lock. A key (marked BWB or SC) on the boat key ring will allow access.



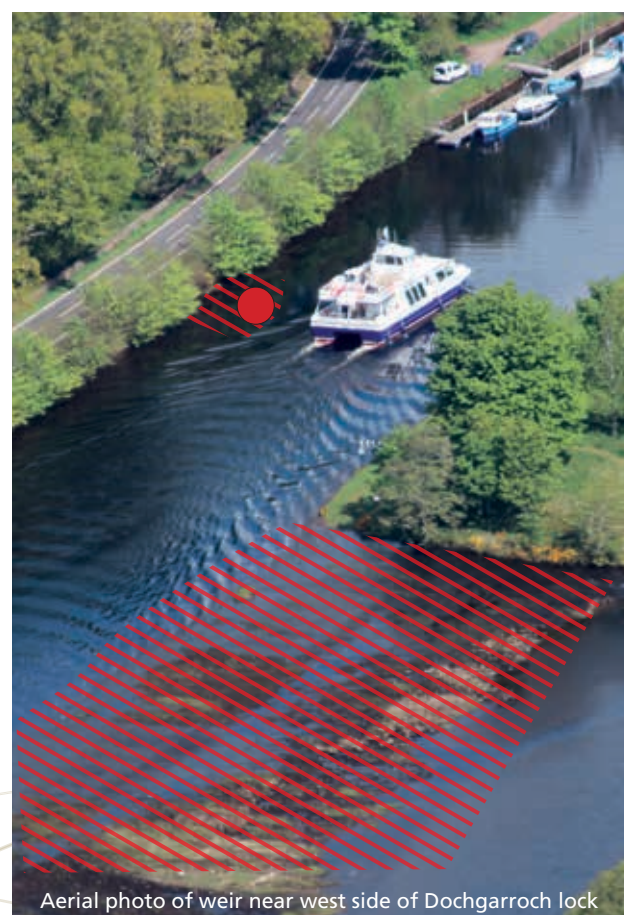
As you leave Dochgarroch Lock and the berthing pontoons, heading to Dochfour be aware of the red marker buoy at the entrance to culvert outlet on your starboard side. You will begin to pass the weir on your port side. This area is very shallow.

It is very important that you **keep well clear of the weir.**
If you go too close, you can be pulled onto the weir due to rate and volume of water flowing over it.

Be also aware while navigating through Loch Dochfour, of the departing and arriving large Jacobite vessels that operate in and out of this section and their potentially large wakes they create. Try to give them a wide berth.

Once you have passed the weir, please keep to the centre of Loch Dochfour and follow the route on your navigation chart. **It is important to follow this course and not deviate off course, as there shallow areas and they are clearly marked on your chart.**

Navigation Information on Buoyed Channels:
On your Outbound journey, when travelling from East to West (from Inverness to Banavie) the Green buoys should be to port (left) and Red Buoys to starboard (right). On your return journey, you will pass the marker buoys the opposite way.



Loch Ness

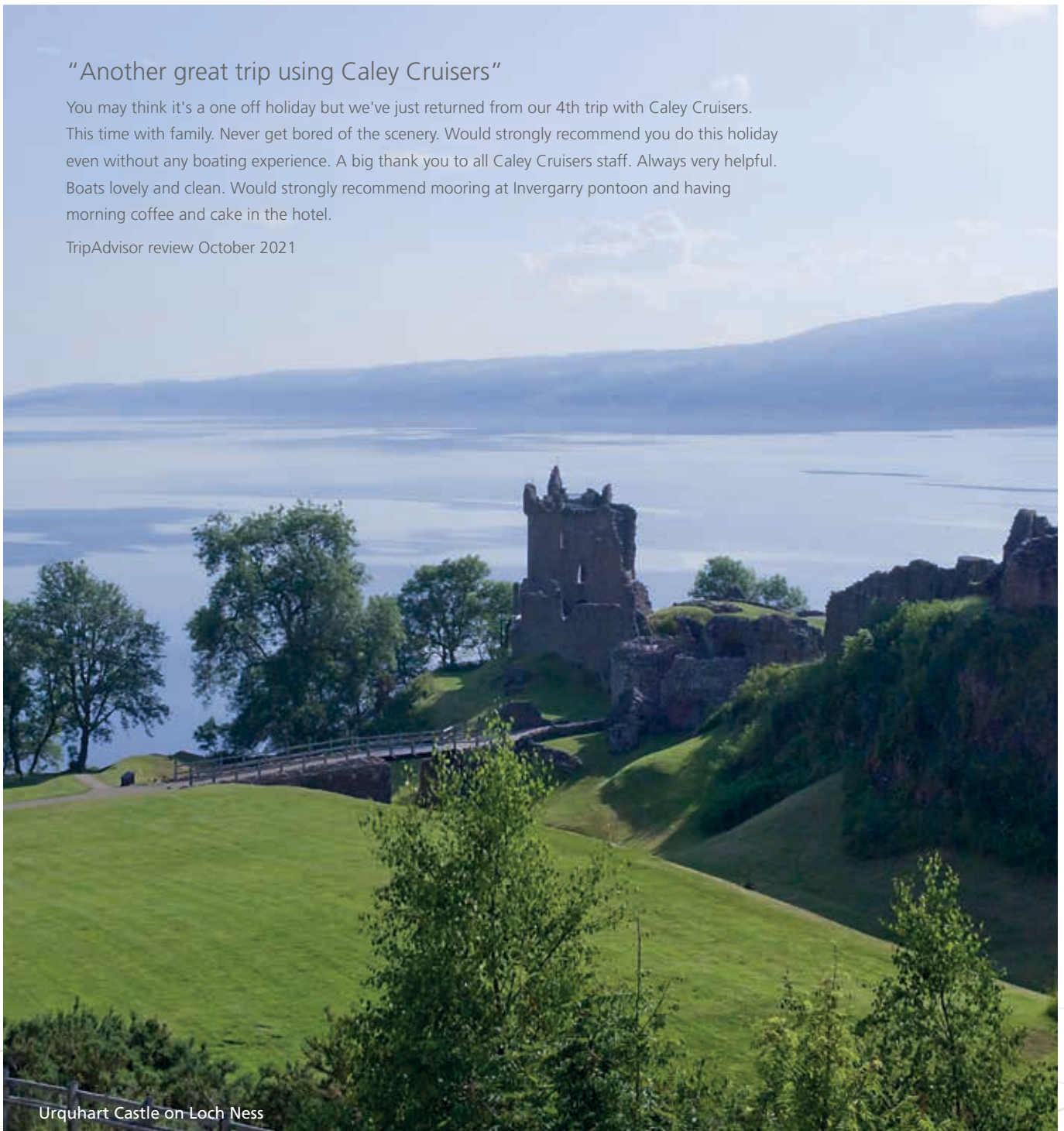
With a depth of 788 feet (240 metres) at its deepest point and a length of about 23 miles (36 km), Loch Ness holds the largest volume of fresh water in Great Britain.

The never ending search for the world-famous Loch Ness Monster... In 1987 a search of Loch Ness called Operation Deepscan took place. 24 Caley Cruisers boats equipped with sonar were deployed across the whole width of the lake, simultaneously sending out acoustic waves. The search lasted for a week and BBC news reported that a number of sonar contacts had been picked up, indicating an unidentified object of unusual size and strength. However after further analysis of the sonar images it was concluded that they pointed to debris at the bottom of the loch, although three of the pictures were of moving debris!

“Another great trip using Caley Cruisers”

You may think it's a one off holiday but we've just returned from our 4th trip with Caley Cruisers. This time with family. Never get bored of the scenery. Would strongly recommend you do this holiday even without any boating experience. A big thank you to all Caley Cruisers staff. Always very helpful. Boats lovely and clean. Would strongly recommend mooring at Invergarry pontoon and having morning coffee and cake in the hotel.

TripAdvisor review October 2021



Urquhart Castle on Loch Ness

“What a great company”

We have felt so well looked after, from booking, right through to the end of the trip. Staff have been helpful throughout the whole process. The boat was very comfortable, and we were given a thorough introduction to it's operation. We didn't need any support during the trip but felt reassured that support was available.

We wouldn't hesitate to recommend Caley Cruisers. Many thanks.

Facebook review June 2021



Urquhart Bay Harbour & Drumnadrochit (IV63 6XR & IV63 6TX)



You will arrive at Urquhart Bay Harbour just over an hour after departure from Dochgarroch Lock. The harbour is a popular stop, especially on the first evening, so it can get quite busy here. **Please stern berth here, see plan below, to maximise space for those coming in after you.** There is enough space for around 12 – 14 vessels.

Important - Keep in the middle of the channel as you approach. There is an exception to the buoyage at the harbour entrance: here, as you enter the harbour, the red buoys should be to your left (port) and the green to your right (starboard). The area outside the harbour is very shallow so keep well clear. Please note that an **RNLI lifeboat station** is located next to the harbour entrance. Take care when approaching.

← TO DRUMNADROCHIT (1.5 MILES)

FAST ROAD TRAFFIC

PRIVATE KEEP OUT

WATER POINT

STERN BERTH CRUISERS

RNLI LIFEBOAT STATION

KEEP AWAY - SHALLOW

PRIVATE PIER

CORRECT APPROACH TO HARBOUR.
KEEP TO CENTRE OF BUOYS

KEEP AWAY - SHALLOW

KEEP AWAY - SHALLOW

COMMERCIAL BOATS ONLY

NO BERTHING ALLOWED

KEEP WELL CLEAR

URQUHART CASTLE

KEEP AWAY - SHALLOW

Berthing

The Urquhart Bay Harbour berthing fees are included in the canal fees applicable for all hire vessels. All other vessels must purchase a berthing ticket at the machine or via the QR code.

Shore Power

To use shore power, please scan the QR code to pay and plug in your shore power cable at an available power socket. Charge: £5 for 24 hrs. There is no longer a ticket machine in the harbour.

Scan the QR code to pay



Drumnadrochit - continued.

Facilities - Power available for a small fee, payable via QR code. Water points are situated around the harbour facility.

The village of Drumnadrochit is close to Urquhart Bay Harbour – the only overnight stop for hire cruisers on Loch Ness. The harbour mooring charges for hire vessels are included as part of the canal fees paid. If you wish to use the shore power, please pay the applicable fee via the QR code. It takes about a 25 minutes to walk from the harbour into the village centre. There you can find the Loch Ness Centre & Exhibition as well as good restaurants and cafés, gift shops, convenient store, newsagent, post office and a pharmacy.

Please remember to attach your fenders when moored at the harbour.

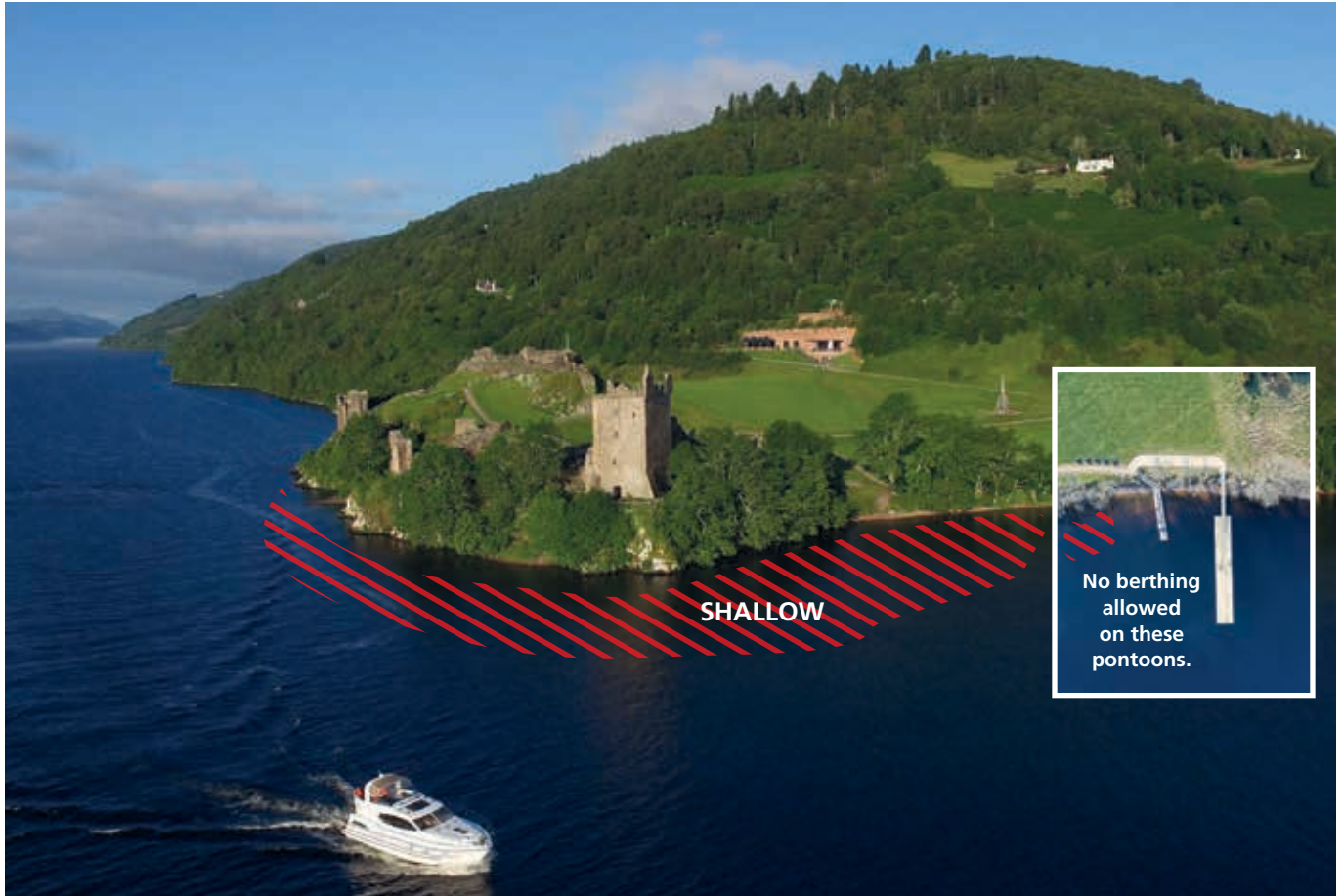


Fiddlers Restaurant and Coffee Shop



For up to date Drumnadrochit visitor information please visit www.lochnesstravel.com or scan the QR code opposite.

Urquhart Castle (IV63 6XJ)



Urquhart Castle - The ancient ruins and former stronghold is magnificently situated on the banks of Loch Ness and is owned and managed by Historic Environment Scotland. The visitor centre comprises of exhibition, audio-visual presentation, shop, café and toilets. Please note that the easiest way to get to the castle from the mooring at Urquhart Bay harbour is by taxi. If you prefer to walk, it takes most likely a little more than 1 hr to walk the 3.3 miles from the harbour, through the villages of Drumnadrochit and Lewiston.



Unfortunatley the Pontoons at the Castle are for Commercial Boats only.

Tickets are available from: Loch Ness Hub in Drumnadrochit where transport to the Castle can also be booked or Urquhart Castle direct by scanning the QR code opposite.

Be Aware of The Commercial Vessels operating around Urquhart Castle. Keep well clear.

Foyers (IV2 6YE)



Important - Due to the pier being exposed to the weather, **no overnight mooring is permitted** at Foyers. Please request permission to berth from the boat yard first, prior to accessing Foyers pier, as adverse weather conditions or forecast may prevent hire cruisers from mooring here.

Once permission from the boat yard has been given, **you must then contact Foyers Pier Ltd on 07377 423 051 to gain authorisation to berth**. Please note: a berthing charge of £5 for 2 hrs is applicable at Foyers pier (fee may be subject to change at the discretion of the owner).

Berthing should not exceed 2 hrs and please keep monitoring the weather whilst ashore. Ensure fenders are put in place. Care must be taken when approaching the pier. If you're approaching from the south, please take a wide berth around the large green marker buoy near the river mouth, as the area is very shallow. **Do not pass between the green buoy and the shores.**

The small village of Foyers is situated on the quieter eastern shore of Loch Ness. The village is approximately 1 mile from the pier through pretty woodland on a steep path/narrow road. Foyers is also the location of an SSE hydro power station situated within the old power house of the Aluminium smelter at Foyers. Electricity has been generated in the area since 1896 when power was needed to supply an aluminium smelter, which was shut down in 1971. Today it is part of the Great Glen hydro scheme operated by Scottish and Southern Energy.

There is a short but spectacular walk to the Falls of Foyers. The river Foyers drops an impressive 140 feet into the gorge known as the Falls of Foyers, and then runs into Loch Ness. This is most dramatic when the rivers are in spate. There are also a few other woodland walks possible around this area. The building at the pier, a former aluminium plant, is a hydroelectric power station, feeding the national grid as part of the Great Glen hydro scheme.



Torridon at Foyers Pier

Falls of Foyers - This is a visitor attraction since Victorian times. A short but picturesque steep uphill walk through woodland to the Falls of Foyers (1 mile). There is a viewpoint, from which the falls (140 ft) can be seen in all their beauty - provided the river carries sufficient water.

When berthing at Foyers please remember to use fenders as shown in photo.

Fort Augustus (PH32 4DD)



Important - Please make sure you choose the canal entrance, which is on your left, and not the river mouth. It is extremely easy to make a mistake here, so please refer to your Navigation Chart for more information.



Fort Augustus Bottom Flight

Fort Augustus with its flight of 5 locks is one of the most picturesque stops along the canal and a busy village during the cruising season. The lock flight can take about 1-1.5 hours to negotiate, so it's important to make sure you allow plenty of time and arrive well in advance. There is usually sufficient berthing available at the top and bottom of the lock flight.

There is usually sufficient berthing available at the top and the bottom of the lock flight. However, please try to be considerate when berthing, by pulling your boat up, to make space for others coming in after you.

Clocks at the bottom and top of the flight, will give an indication as to the next locking time. Once you have tied up your boat, speak to the Lock Keeper if you want to go up or down the flight. This is required to assist them with their planning, especially when it is very busy.

See page 42 "Fort Augustus" for further information.



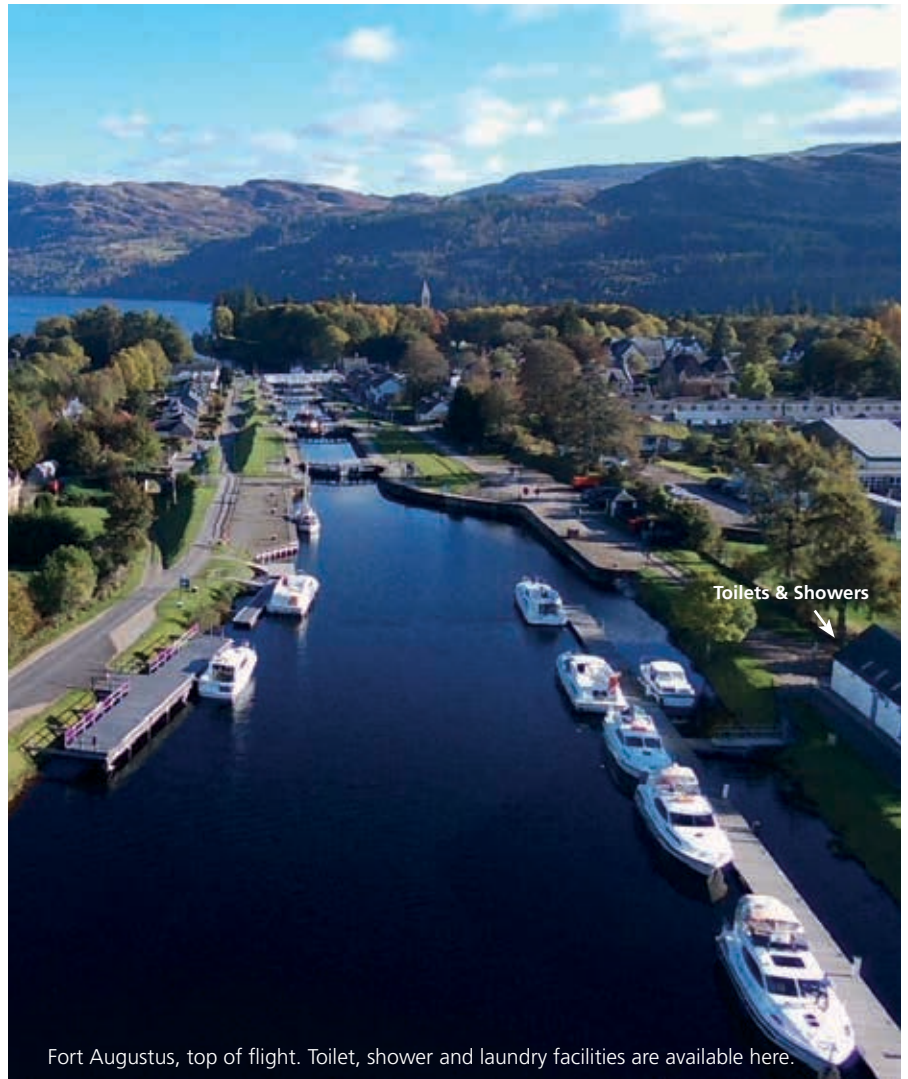
Clocks at the bottom and top of the lock flight indicate the approximate time of the next locking.



Locking at Fort Augustus



Fort Augustus Mooring



Fort Augustus, top of flight. Toilet, shower and laundry facilities are available here.

Facilities - Bottom of flight: toilets & showers, laundry, water, litter disposal, water and recycling.

Top of flight: toilets & showers, laundry, water, litter disposal, recycling, pump-out, electricity.

During rush hour traffic the **swing bridge** at the bottom of the **Fort Augustus** lock flight will not open for Canal traffic during the following times: 08:20 – 09:00 (school term) and 08:40 – 09:00 (school holidays), applicable Mon-Fri.



For up to date Fort Augustus visitor information please visit www.visitscotland.com/info/towns-villages/fort-augustus-p236671 or scan the QR code opposite.

Kytra Lock (PH32 4BT)

Kytra lock is a very peaceful location that you will reach not long after departing Fort Augustus - about 2.5 miles south-west from there – and it's probably one of the prettiest stops along the canal system. The towpath runs all the way from Fort Augustus, past Kytra and finishes at Aberchalder Bridge, just before you head out onto Loch Oich, so it's great to cycle or walk between these points. Kytra has a nice barbecue spot for you to use if you wish.

Facilities - electricity, barbeque spot



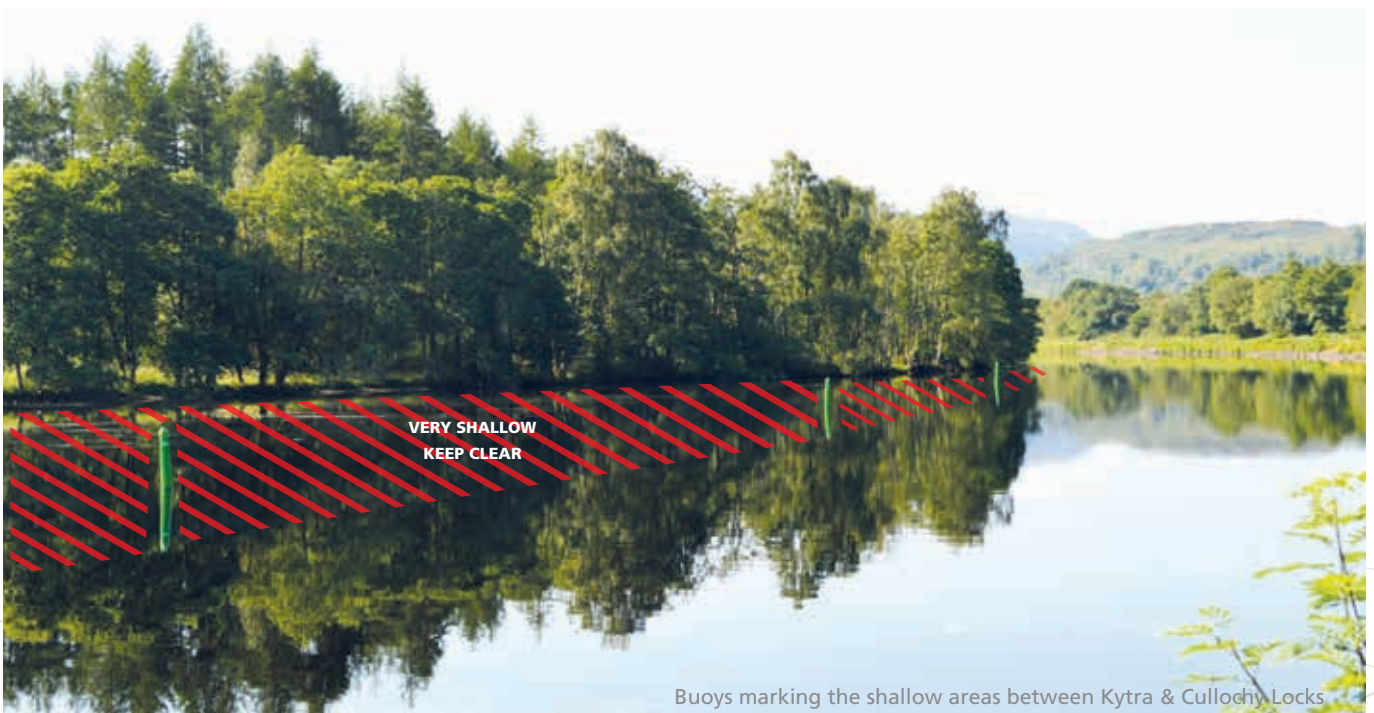
Kytra Lock from East side



West side of Kytra



Important - When you depart Kytra, heading west, the canal widens and green buoys mark the channel. Pay close attention here and do not cut the corner (shown above in red) as it is very easy to go aground.



Buoys marking the shallow areas between Kytra & Cullochy Locks

Cullochy Lock (PH35 4HN)

Another beautiful stop along the canal route between Kytra Lock and the Aberchalder swing bridge, Cullochy Lock is a peaceful place in a lovely remote location, located just before you get through the swing bridge and onto Loch Oich. There are plenty of transit pontoons on either side of Cullochy Lock.



Berthing on the east side of Cullochy Lock



View of Cullochy Lock, looking towards east

Aberchalder Swing Bridge (PH35 4HN)



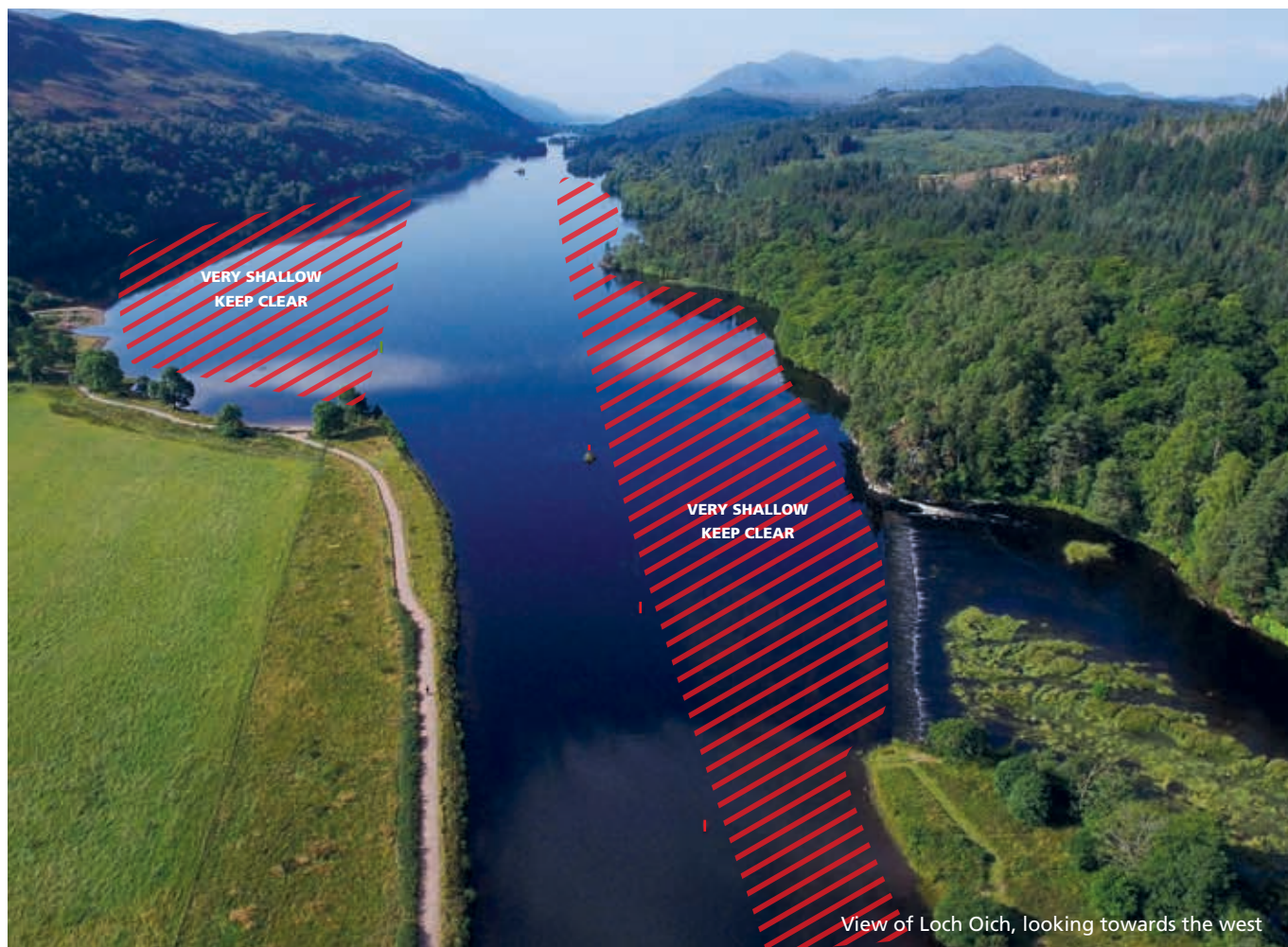
After departing Cullochy Lock, you will head through Aberchalder Swing Bridge and out onto Loch Oich. Some of the smaller vessels, such as Eriskay and Mull of Kintyre, may be able to pass under.

However, DO NOT attempt to pass under the bridge without instruction from the Bridge Keeper. As the water levels vary!

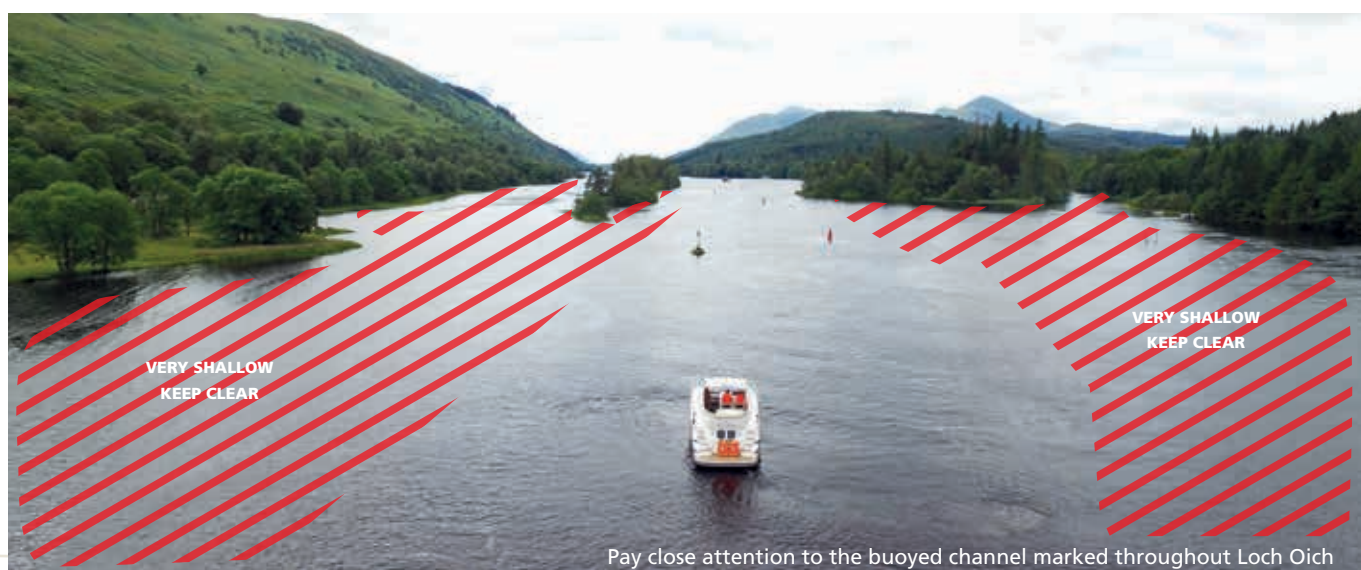


View of Aberchalder Bridge looking towards Loch Oich and the west

Loch Oich (PH35 4HW)



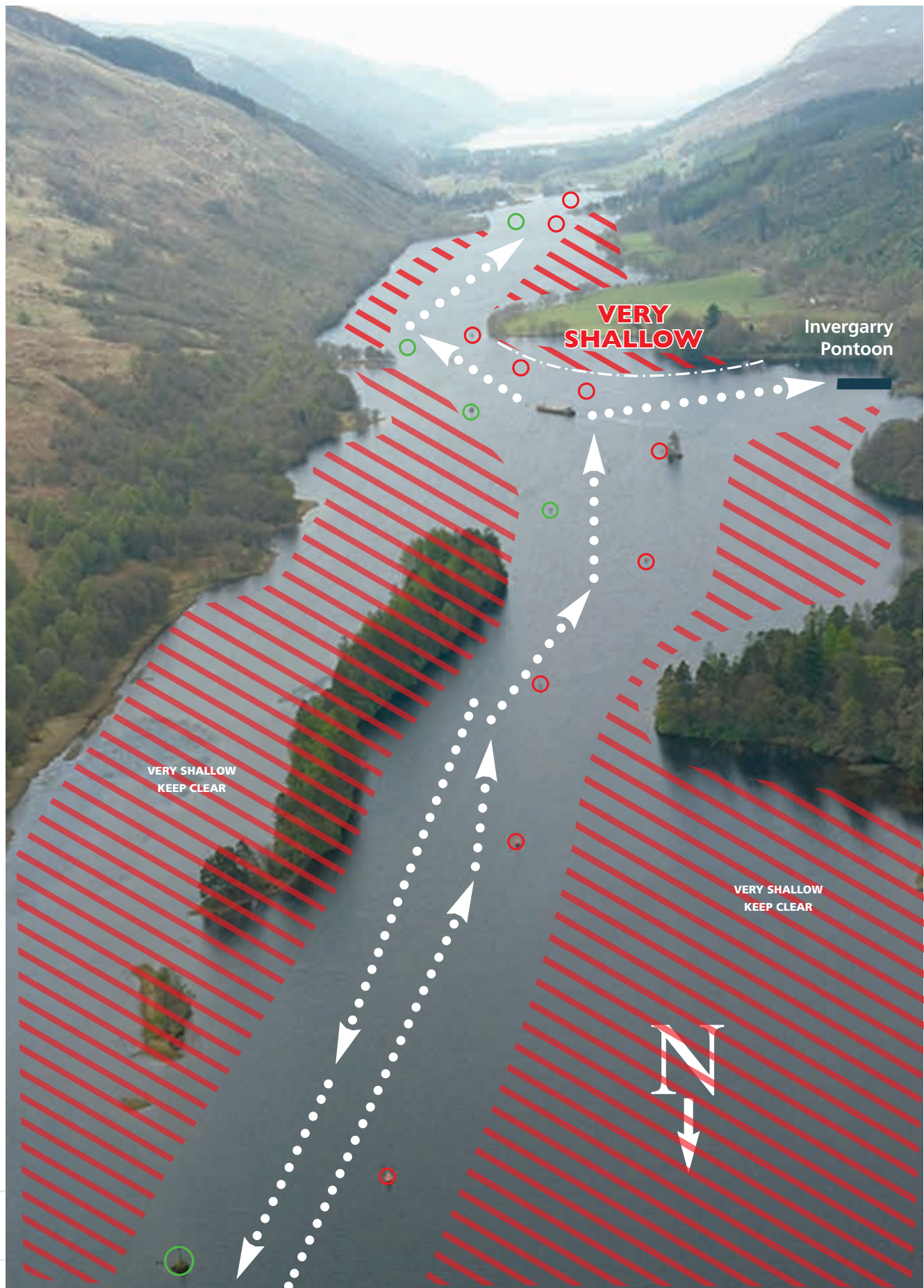
Important - Loch Oich is much smaller than Loch Ness and Loch Lochy. The Loch is very shallow and therefore it is very easy to run your boat aground. You must be extremely careful when navigating through this section. Please keep to the centre of the Loch at all times and follow the buoyed channel (see opposite page). This channel is also clearly indicated on your Navigation Chart and on p30.



Buoyed Channel Loch Oich

Buoyage on central Loch Oich approaches to castle pier.

Please observe **very shallow** area when approaching and leaving pier.





Well of Seven Heads bows to Mooring

Example of mooring at the Well of Seven Heads and Invergarry pontoons.

When berthing at these pontoons, approach bows-to because of the shallow waters as you approach shore. When leaving these pontoons reverse out into deep water and keep clear of shore.

Remember to attach fenders as shown.

Please note no dogs allowed at Invergarry Castle.



Invergarry Castle

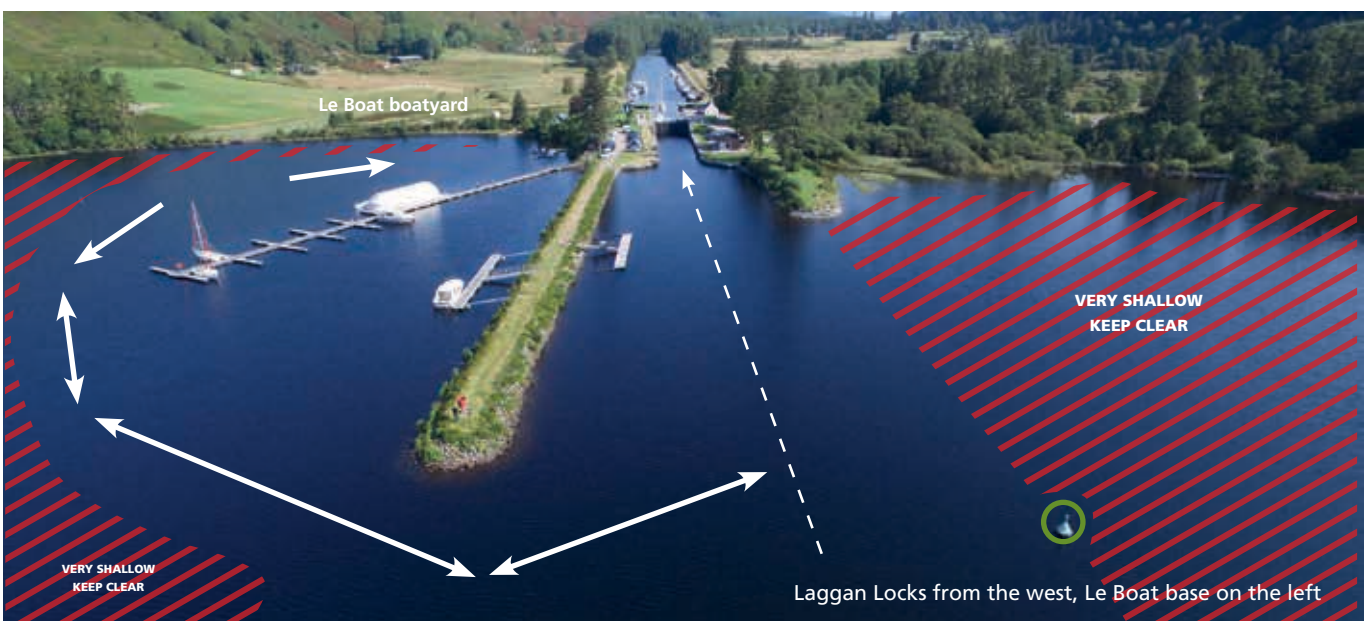
Laggan Locks (PH34 4EA)

A flight of 2 locks connecting the Laggan Avenue, a stunning stretch of tall trees, with Ceann Loch to lead into Loch Lochy. **Scottish Canals facilities available:** Toilets & Showers, Water, Power, Litter Disposal and Recycling. Another boat yard, Le Boat, also offers some facilities, including pump-out (if required) and additional berthing.



Top of Laggan Locks, east side

Important - For directions to Le Boat please check your navigational chart and please do take great care approaching, as this area is partly very shallow.



Laggan Locks from the west, Le Boat base on the left

Entrance to Laggan Locks

When you come off Loch Lochy and come through the buoyed channel into Ceann Loch, which is very shallow, as show. Before entering the Laggan Lock chamber, its important that you tie up outside on the pontoon and speak to the Lock Keeper, to arrange entry. This is a two-lock system, however, the lock keepers mainly use it as a one-lock system. Therefore in this instance, do not automatically assume, because the lock chamber is open, that you can progress in. He might not be there or even at Lunch.

Le Boat Yard

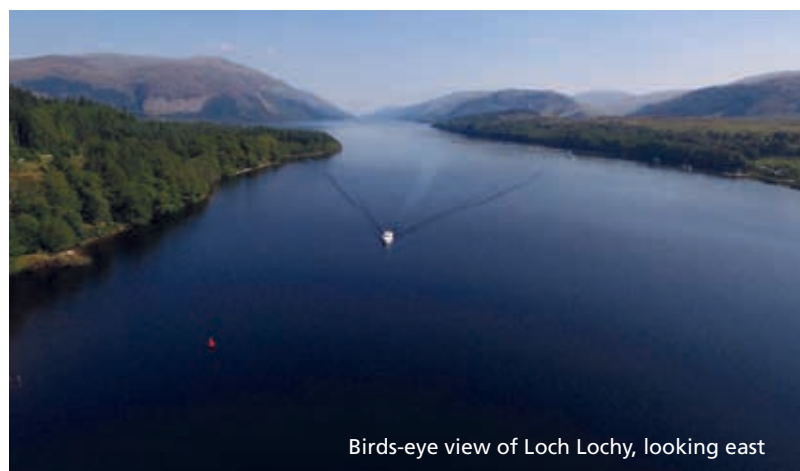
You can moor up overnight at this boatyard and use the facilities onshore, water and electric hook up are complimentary. Pump outs are available on request, please contact boat yard.

Loch Lochy

Loch Lochy is another large freshwater loch and the third deepest loch (mean depth of 70m) in Scotland. The Battle of the Shirts (Blàr na Léine) was a Scottish clan battle that took place in July 1544 at the northern end of Loch Lochy. For monster hunters, Loch Lochy is known as the haunt of Lizzie, its very own monster.



Important - Please note: The pontoons at the Corriegour Lodge Hotel as well as at The Whispering Pine Lodge are **not suitable and not safe to berth** any of the Caley Cruisers craft. Both restaurants can be reached by Taxi from Laggan Locks (about 3 miles). Pre-booking of Transport is advisable.



Birds-eye view of Loch Lochy, looking east



Lighthouse on approach to Gairloch locks

After Laggan Locks and before entering Loch Lochy you will pass through Ceann Loch and through the narrow buoy channel clearly marked above and on your chart. This small loch is not very deep so please keep clear of the shallow areas.

Gairloch Locks (PH34 4EQ)



Top of Gairloch Locks, looking towards the east and onto Loch Lochy

Gairloch is a picturesque, small hamlet and lies at the southern end of Loch Lochy. Although there are two sets of lock gates and a small swing bridge, the lower lock gates are quite frequently left open, so you may only have to pass through one lock. Some of the smaller vessels, such as Eriskay and Mull of Kintyre, may be able to pass under the swing bridge, depending on the water level. **However, DO NOT attempt to pass under the bridge without instruction from the lock keepers** who also operate the bridge. Depending on traffic, this swing bridge is sometimes also left open and the lock keepers will advise accordingly.

The area has great views of Ben Nevis and an extensive beech forest provides delightful walking and cycling paths.

Scottish Canals facilities available: Toilets & Showers, Power, Laundry, Litter Disposal & Recycling.



Top of Gairloch locks, looking east

Moy Bridge (PH33 7PD)



Important - Do not attempt to pass through Moy Bridge unless both spans of the bridge are open.

Banavie & Fort William

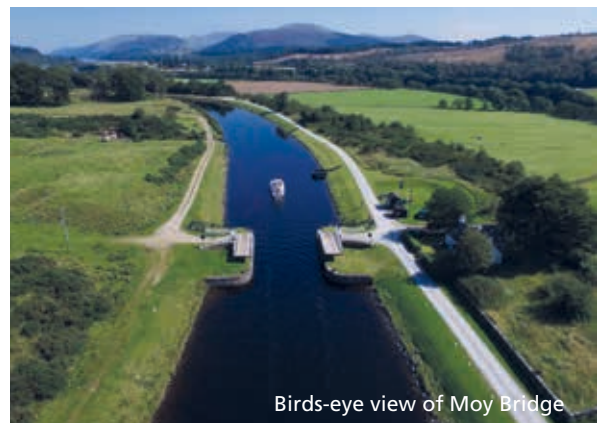
(PH33 7LY & PH33 6EN)

The top of **Neptune's Staircase** at Banavie is the cruising limit for all hire boats. From here you have one of the finest views of Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in the UK.

It should take about 50-60 min. to walk the 3 miles (5 km) to Fort William town centre. There is a path alongside the main road or walk via the village of Caol, crossing the river Lochy beside the railway bridge (part of the Great Glen Way). **Scottish Canals facilities available:** Toilets & Showers, Water, Power, Pump-out, Laundry, Litter Disposal and Recycling.



For up to date Fort William visitor information please visit www.visitfortwilliam.co.uk or scan the QR code opposite.



Birds-eye view of Moy Bridge



Aerial view of Banavie and Neptune's Staircase

Section 2 - Safety on Board

Who's in charge?

One of the great things about boating is that everyone can muck in together. However, at least one person needs to know the boat handling basics and to understand the safety guidelines.

So, once you have chosen a 'skipper', it will be his or her job to make sure the crew and passengers have all the information they need to stay safe. It is a good idea to be clear on each crew member's duties.

Good boating takes teamwork. So you need a competent crew who know how to handle the boat and how to stop the engine, who can help with mooring, moving through the locks, navigation and so on. As well as knowing the procedures, your crew should be aware of the safety risks in each situation and how to avoid accidents. It is also recommended you have a stand in skipper in case of illness.

Passengers who are not going to be helping with any of the boat handling still need to be aware of the basic safety rules, therefore the skipper must ensure that everyone on board reads through the safety information in the boat handbook and the boating guide.

Everyone must wear sensible, non-slip footwear on board at all times and we recommend for everyone to wear their Life Jackets securely fastened when on deck. **Young children should also wear Life Jackets securely fastened when ashore near the quayside at any mooring.**

Before you set off, here are a few simple tips for trouble free boating.

- Make sure you and your crew know how to handle the boat.
- Get information as to the expected weather conditions.
- Plan your cruise and allow enough time to complete it without rushing. This is especially important at times of the year when it gets dark earlier.
- Keep to the recommended cruising area as detailed in your navigational chart, **stay at least 300 meters** away from the shoreline of the large lochs and **do not enter areas listed as too shallow.**
- **Remember – alcohol impairs your judgement and makes accidents more likely. Drink and Boat units is the same as Scotland Drink Drive Limit.**

Safety checklist

- Life Jackets, life belts & life floats.
- Fire extinguisher & fire blanket.
- Emergency equipment – drift anchor, spot lamp, flares and safety boarding ladder.
- Navigational chart.
- Mobile phone (charged and switched on) – also for weather updates etc..



Boat handling

The most important thing to remember when handling a boat for the first time is to take things as **slowly** as possible. This way you have more time to react if things go wrong and the consequences of a mistake are greatly reduced.

Setting off

Start the engine and allow a few minutes for it to warm up before you move off. Unfasten the front and back mooring ropes from the shore; coil them carefully so they are ready for use and **make sure they are stored so they cannot fall into the water**. A rope trailing in the water can easily end up getting wrapped around the boat's propeller – this can stall the engine and leave your boat immobilised.

Check that there are no boats approaching, and that your steering is set straight ahead. Use your bow thruster to move the bow of the boat away from the mooring and then engage forward gear and gently increase the power as the boat moves away from the mooring. Be particularly careful that the stern of your boat does not get too close to other boats as you move off.

On inland waterways, stay to the right of the canal or channel so that if a boat is coming towards you pass it "left hand side to left hand side" (i.e. port to port). If there are no other boats it is best to keep to the centre of the channel but be ready to move over to the right as soon as you see a boat coming towards you. Remember that **you should never take your boat close to the bank** – the edge of the canal is **shallow and rocky** and can easily damage your boat, so make sure you keep **a boat's width away** from the bank.

Always **slow down** when passing moored boats, as the wash from your boat can cause damage or injury. Don't let your boat create a breaking wave behind it as this erodes the banks. The **speed limit** on the **Caledonian Canal** is **6mph**.

Slowing down and stopping

Boats don't have brakes! So stopping takes a long time. Go into neutral and the boat will gradually slow down and stop. Bear in mind that the steering will have less effect as the boat slows down. If you need to stop the boat quickly, go into reverse and gently increase the power. This will slow the boat rapidly, but you will find that the stern of the boat swings to the right or left depending on boat class.

Special safety tips

- Always ensure Life Jackets are worn by all crew members when underway and during locking and berthing.
- Be aware of what is happening around you – on the boat, in the water and on the banks.
- Passengers should sit in the correct seating areas, **not on the roof area or with their legs over the side** of the boat.
- Think ahead and make sure you are prepared for the next bridge or lock. Are the ropes ready?



Reversing

Reversing a boat takes a little practice. The propellor in reverse causes the stern of the boat to swing to the right or the left, depending on the propellor type. Also there is very little water flowing over the rudder, therefore you have limited steering control. Please note that on the majority of boat classes, they **swing to the LEFT in reverse**. This will be covered during your instruction.

If your boat has thrusters, ensure steering is set straight ahead, then select reverse and gently increase power until you see the boat is moving slowly backwards. Select neutral (stopping the propeller helps keep the boat straight) after which the boat will continue to move backwards. You can use short bursts on the thrusters to keep the boat on course and you may need to periodically engage reverse for a few seconds to keep the boat moving.

If you are reversing to moor stern on never allow anyone to stand on the bathing platform or the ladder or to jump ashore. If they fall into the water they could either be crushed by the boat or dragged into the propeller.

Mooring

As you approach a mooring, tell your crew which side of the boat will be alongside and have them ready to step onto the jetty. **Never encourage crew members to jump onto the jetty!** If the boat has stopped away from the jetty, it is much safer to make another approach than risk injury to people.

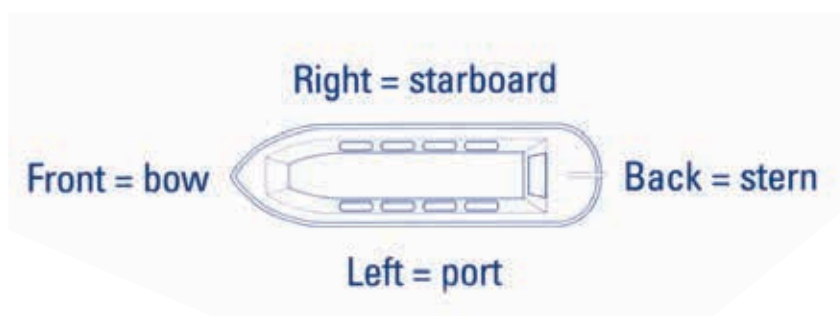
Approach the jetty **slowly** with the bow in toward the jetty. When the bow is about 2 meters away from the jetty, steer away and select neutral. This brings the boat parallel with the jetty at which point you can briefly engage reverse to stop the boat.

You will find the boat will now move gently sideways through the water toward the jetty. If it is safe to do so ask the crew to step ashore with your lines.

Until you get familiar with handling the boat, you may find that you have come to a stop too far away from the jetty. Use your thruster to push the boat toward the jetty. **If your boat does not have a stern thruster, turn the steering away from the jetty, engage forward gear for a few seconds** and then reverse for another few seconds. This will bring the stern of the boat in toward the jetty.

Your crew should be able to step ashore – not jump. They can either carry the rope with them, making sure there is plenty of slack, or be passed the ropes once on shore.

Please always take extra care when mooring on a pontoon or jetty. Make sure that the space you have selected for your boat is suitable and that the mooring does not show any signs of damage or obstructions that could cause an accident or damage to the vessel.



Ropes

Be extremely careful when tying up ropes. Accidents and injury can happen. Therefore it is very important to have good communication between the crew, who are working with ropes and the with the skipper, especially when tying and untying ropes from their cleats, either onboard or ashore. **Poor communication can result in fingers being severely injured by getting trapped in a rope on a cleat**, when for example, the skipper engages forward gear, assuming that the boat has been successfully untied by the crew! **In order to prevent this... Always ensure clear verbal instructions have been given and understood by the skipper and crew.**

Always coil ropes when you have finished with them and place them where they **cannot fall over the side and people cannot stand on them**. In rough weather out on the lochs, it may be **safer to remove the ropes** and keep them inside the boat to stop them being blown over the side.

Remember – a rope trailing in the water can easily get wrapped around the boat's propeller and stall the engine, leaving your boat immobilised.

When you are securing the boat to the shore or when locking, always take the ropes **UNDERNEATH** the guard rails, never over them. If a rope running over a rail becomes tight it can bend the guard rail.

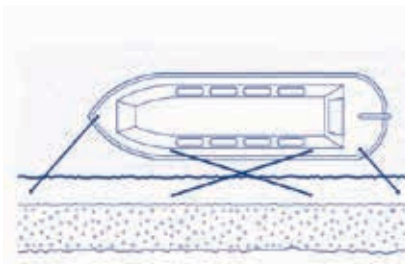
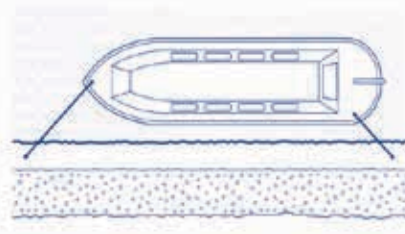
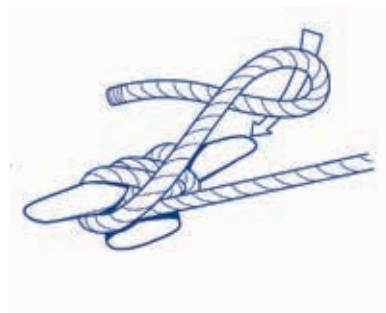
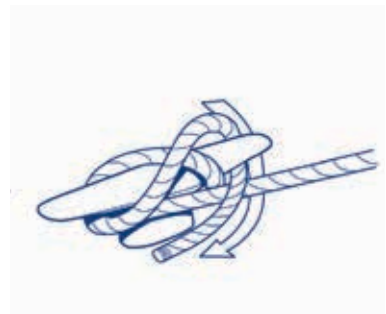
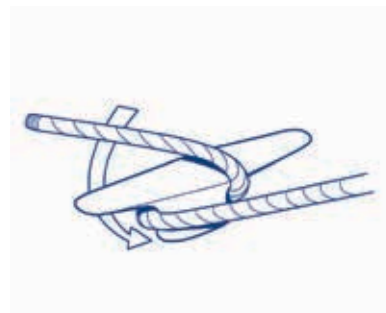
When mooring up, always secure the boat as you were shown at the boatyard as this is the safest and easiest way to make sure your boat stays secured to the shore or pontoon.

Starting from where the ropes are secured to the boat make a loop in the rope and pass it under the rails and through the mooring ring ashore. Then pass it back onboard and place it over the cleat on deck. Pull the free end of the rope tight then run the rope over the cleat in a figure of eight fashion. Secure the rope by taking a turn around the back of the cleat then two half hitches.

Doubling the rope means the boat is much more secure. When you need to release the boat you only need to remove the rope from the cleat and pull the loop from the mooring ring without stepping ashore or having to pull yards of rope onto the boat.

Special safety tips

- Make sure you know how to use your ropes properly. Keep them coiled, free from knots and don't allow them to be dropped into the water.
- An inexperienced skipper may bump into a jetty or pontoon too quickly so it is safer for older/infirm members of the party to sit down inside the boat when mooring.



To secure the boat overnight in windy conditions, you can use additional ropes, i.e. forward and aft spring lines, as shown here in the drawing.

Fenders

There are four fenders stored on your boat, they should be used to protect your hull and **put in place before berthing** onto a pontoon, coming alongside another vessel or entering Lock Chambers. When using the fenders be very careful to ensure they are not placed close to the central heating exhaust outlet on the hull. (This position is marked by a red warning sign indicator on the deck.)

Pontoon / Jetties Fenders

If you are berthing side to onto a pontoon, you should attach, by tying the rope of the fenders securely to the bottom of the stanchion base and not to the guard wires. The minimum would be two fenders.

Urquhart Bay Harbour Fenders

When berthing at the harbour attach two fenders to the stern, the remaining two can be used on the sides if there are any boats berthed beside you.

Lock Chambers Fenders

The boats have their own fendering that protects the hull when locking, however in most of the lock chambers where the water levels drop considerably, it is **strongly recommended to attach your fenders alongside and close to the bow**. When the water level drops, the boats fendering on the bow, can catch the lock wall as the boat lowers down the chamber. **Damage to the hull and fendering** can be caused, if a fender is not put in place to prevent this.

Visibility

Do not attempt to cruise in bad visibility, when foggy / misty or after dusk. (See Page 47 Section 4 Adverse Weather conditions) It is very rare that the fog or mist hangs about in the Glen. **It is very important to plan your journey to arrive approximately two hours before it gets dark**. If in doubt or need advice, then please contact us.

Navigation

Please follow carefully the navigational chart on board and refer to navigation aids (aerial photographs) on pages 4-36 in this guide. This should prevent problems such as running aground. If this does happen, your boat will have to be examined by one of our engineers and **may have to be returned to the boatyard** for further inspection – consequently ending your holiday.

This can be avoided by studying the chart and **never being closer than 300 metres to the shore line on the lochs**, except where your chart indicates that this is in order. Do not attempt to enter any areas marked on the chart as too shallow – indicated by red lines. The loch sides **shelve so quickly in places**, you can go from 100 meters of water below you to just 1 meter in a very short distance and the shallow areas cannot be seen due to the blackness of the water. It is much safer to stay in the middle of the loch.

Do not just follow the boat in front; the chances are the skipper may be following an incorrect course. If you feel that he is on the wrong course, sound your horn and draw attention to the fact. If a boat runs aground – apart from the dangers of doing so, it unnerves the crew and passengers and spoils the holiday atmosphere.

Channel buoys

Where you see red and green buoys in certain parts of the lochs, guide yourself on the correct course as indicated in your navigational chart. **Take particular care on the approach to Loch Oich as the colours of the marker buoys can be misleading in strong sunlight**. It is advisable to wear sunglasses as this will help to judge the true colour of the buoys.

Do not attempt to cruise in bad visibility, after dusk or if foggy/misty.

Ventilation and preventing condensation

All boats have built-in ventilation in all cabins. However, we recommend opening additional windows/hatches when you are not cruising. This will reduce the excess of condensation that can build up overnight.

Section 3 - Canal Information

Locking

All locks are operated by Scottish Canals staff, who you will find very friendly and helpful. They will always try to assist you whenever possible.

A lock is simply a chamber with gates at either end. By emptying or filling that chamber with water, your boat will be moved up or down onto a new section of the waterway.

When locking, all crew members must wear a correctly fitted Life Jacket before entering the chamber and wear gloves for handling ropes. Ropes should be neatly coiled, passed under the rail and ready to throw. As you approach the lock, one competent crew member should be on the bow, ready with the rope and listening to instructions from the Lock Keeper. The Lock Keeper will signal as to which side of the lock chamber you should go to. Your skipper should then gently approach staying close to the wall. As a general rule, commercial or large craft will enter the lock first.

The Lock Keeper will indicate when he or she wants the bow rope thrown to them. Don't throw too early. Generally it will be the bow line (front) first. However, if the wind is blowing from behind the boat then you may be asked to throw the stern line (back) instead.

A Boat with only two people onboard (Skipper and one Crew)

The wind predominantly blows from a south westerly direction, therefore when you head down the glen and approach a lock chamber, **the wind will be on your bow**. If there are only two people on board, it's important to know which position the single crew member should be, when entering a lock chamber. **In this example the single crew will be on the Bow**. If the wind blows the opposite direction, then on the stern.

However, when you are on your return journey, back to the yard, the predominantly SW **wind will be on your Stern** and therefore, it is important that the single crew member, is prepared with the rope for the lock keeper **on the stern**. Likewise if the wind blows from the opposite direction, then the Bow.

If you make a mistake when throwing the rope, don't worry, it is a common occurrence; but with a little practice you will soon succeed. So, don't panic, just get the rope coiled and throw again. When the Lock Keeper has the rope, he will pass it around a hook or bollard and then pass it back to a crew member. The crew member should then hold onto the rope firmly. Once the first line is back onboard, the Lock Keeper will ask for the second line. Do not stand on a coil of rope or on the seats - always stand on the deck.

At some locks the chamber is very deep (this mainly applies at Gairloch Locks) and the Lock Keeper will pass a rope down to you instead.

Once all the boats which are being locked through are in the chamber, the lock gates are closed and the Lock Keeper will open the sluices to let the water in or out. The rope must be held firmly when water is coming into the chamber – **do not tie the rope onto a cleat**. It is important you hold the rope firmly and take up the slack. When the water level is going down, **(remember to place a fender near the bow to protect the boat see opposite page)** allow the rope to **move slowly** through your (gloved) hands. When the water has reached the correct level, the Lock Keeper will open the gates. **Do not take the ropes back or try to move off until you have been instructed to by the Lock Keeper**. When all the ropes are securely stored back on board, then use your bow thruster to push your bow away from the wall.

When leaving the lock, remember to proceed slowly. There may be craft berthed immediately outside waiting to go into the chamber.

Accidents can happen quickly, especially if you are not paying attention to what is happening around you. Many people will wrap the rope around their hand, often when talking to someone else which is potentially very dangerous. You can receive major burns from ropes and be scarred as a result, and there is always the danger when working with ropes of losing fingers. You must also be careful that you do not stand on a rope coil, which may lead to a trip which can be dangerous near water.

Special safety tips

- Take your time, be alert and keep an eye out for problems.
- Enter and leave slowly so bumps are less likely to cause damage/injury.
- Always have a competent person handling the ropes.
- Never tie a rope off onto a cleat whilst locking.
- Keep your boat well away from the gates and cills.
- Boats tend to bang about when water flows in and out of a lock – so stay alert.
- When waiting outside a lock, never come closer than 100 feet (about 30 metres) to a closed lock gate.
- Always follow the advice given by a Lock Keeper.
- Always wear your Life Jacket securely fastened

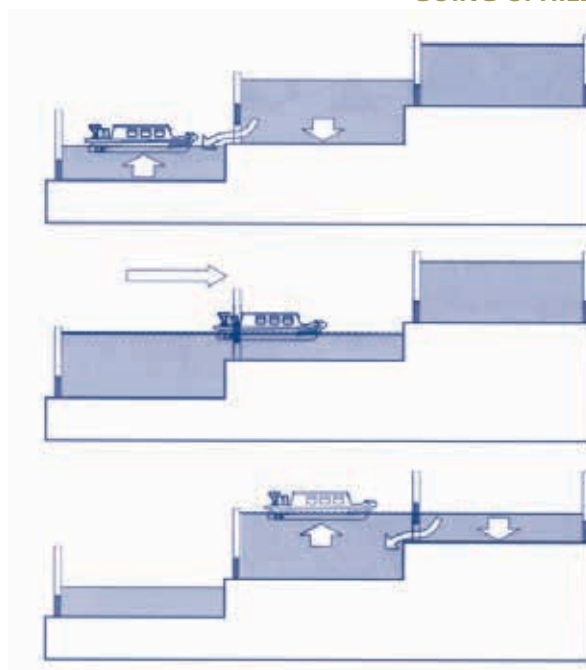
Fort Augustus

At Fort Augustus there are 5 locks, but before you negotiate the locks, you need to pass through the bridge. The whole process, can take up to an hour and a half, depending on the volume of traffic going through the flight. If you are planning to go up the flight, when you first arrive, it is best to find a lock keeper and notify them right away. If you arrive during the Lunch period (an hour taken between 1200 and 1400) you will find a clock display adjacent to the bridge advising of the next locking and in which direction. Therefore you may have to be prepared to wait for the locking, which is going in the direction you want. So please **allow yourself extra time for waiting at Fort Augustus**, especially if you are on your **return journey back to Inverness**. During busy periods the Lock Keepers will be planning their lockings up and down the flight. The Lock Keepers will give you an approximate time for your lock up and information on the order of entering the lock chamber. Priority is generally given to Commercial Vessels. Before commencing the flight up, the Lock Keeper will come to the pontoons and communicate with the Skippers who have checked in with them.

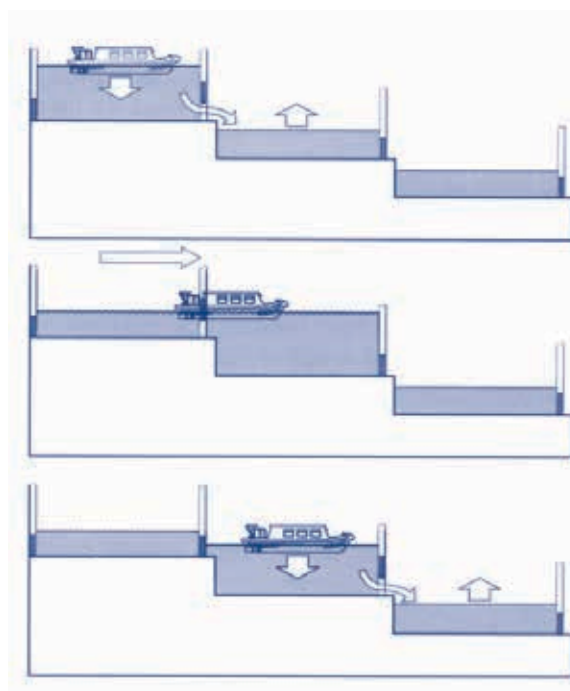
The Locking procedure at Fort Augustus is slightly different as two crew members have to disembark and pull your boat through the flight of locks. Once you pass through the fully swung bridge, you will steer the boat into the first lock chamber and go through the normal procedure of throwing the ropes to the lock keeper. The lock gates will close and the chamber will rise. However, once the water level has changed and reached a safe level, the crew will disembark, wearing securely fastened Life Jackets and holding a bow and stern rope. They will then pull the boat through when instructed by the Lock Keeper, so a certain degree of fitness is required, although once the boat begins to move it travels along without too much difficulty so it is not necessary to be superman or woman!

If you require assistance during the locking, for instance if you have a crew member who needs to remain on board to supervise young children and is not able to leave the vessel, do advise the Lock Keepers and they will try to tie you alongside another vessel for the locking.

GOING UPHILL



GOING DOWNHILL



Assisting the Lock Keeper

To assist with the smooth running of the canal, try to move with other vessels going in the same direction. You should arrive in plenty of time before the last locking or bridge operation of the day. Remember that it takes about 1 hour (depending on canal traffic) to negotiate the flight at Fort Augustus; so you will need to **arrive at least 2.5 hours before the end of the day**. The Lock Keepers' hours are set by Scottish Canals and **if you arrive too late** in the afternoon and it is not possible to lock the vessels through in the time limit they are set, **you will have to wait** until the morning when they re-open. It is important to remember this and not to vent your frustration to the Lock Keepers. When large commercial vessels such as the *Lord of the Glens* are in transit, canal traffic can build up considerably at Fort Augustus. If you intend to get through the flight before the end of the day, then advise the Lock Keepers at Kytra or Cullochry so they can radio ahead and advise the team at Fort Augustus of your plans.

Do not leave children in charge of the ropes. The correct procedure is for the skipper to attend the stern rope and another strong crew member to attend the bow rope.

You must accept, without question, any advice the Lock Keepers offer regarding your rope handling or positioning of the vessel. The Lock Keepers are genuine, helpful people and any advice they issue is only for your safety and benefit. If for any reason you feel that you have been treated unfairly, please phone the boat yard on the number stated in your boat manual in order to confirm facts.

Bridges

All of the bridges along the canal are manned by Scottish Canals staff. They will advise you if the bridge has to be opened for your vessel or if you are able to pass under. **Do not attempt to pass under a bridge without instruction from the Bridge Keeper.**

Scottish Canals Toilets & Showers

You will find a key marked 'BWB' or 'SC' on your boat key ring. This is to allow access for the use of Scottish Canals shower and toilet blocks at the following locations:

- Dochgarroch Locks
- Fort Augustus Locks (top & bottom) – laundry facilities also available.
- Laggan Locks
- Gairlochry Locks – laundry facilities also available.
- Banavie – laundry facilities also available.

Please help to keep these facilities clean and safe for all who use them. Report any acts of vandalism to these facilities to Scottish Canals employees.

Commercial craft

Several large commercial vessels operate on a regular basis on the Caledonian Canal. *Fingal of Caledonia*, *Ros Crana* and *Scottish Highlander* are Dutch hotel barges over 100ft in length. *Lord of the Glens* is a cruise ship which is over 150ft long and 40ft wide and, because of her size, you will be held back from travelling through a canal reach until she has passed through. The Lock Keepers will inform you of her movements when she is in transit.

The *Royal Scot* operates hourly cruises from Fort Augustus, so watch out for vessels which are regularly in transit along the bottom reach of Fort Augustus Canal. Be aware of this when berthing or moving through the canal area going into or out of Loch Ness.

The *Jacobite* vessels operate from the harbour at the Clansman Hotel, Torvean Swing Bridge, Dochgarroch Lock and Urquhart Castle Pier. Please pay attention to the information signs at their berthing locations.

There are also several fast rib boats to look out for on Loch Ness. They operate out of Dochgarroch and further down at Fort Augustus.

All of these craft take visitors and, because of their size, they have right of way and priority over berthing and locking.

Give plenty of room to these commercial craft; they need deep water in the centre of the channel and on the outside of bends. Remember when passing any vessel, pass port to port (left to left). Do not try to overtake these vessels when going into a lock or along any canal section. If you are berthed up at a jetty or pontoon and you are asked to move by any of their crew, please try to assist. Because of their size, they have considerably fewer berthing options available to them than you do. You may be asked to move just a few feet further along a jetty or pontoon in order to clear space for the larger vessel. You will find the skipper and crew on board all of the commercial vessels operating in the Glen to be helpful and co-operative but do remember that they are carrying passengers and may be on a tight schedule. **Please be aware that these large commercial vessels can often create a substantial wake wave when passing, even from a distance, this will rock your boat from side to side, so be prepared.** When you see the wake wave of the commercial vessel coming towards you, try to steer your boat towards the wake after the boat has passed at approximately right angles to it, so the bow of your boat rides over it first. This will be more comfortable and less of an impact, rather than having the wake wave hitting you side on.

It is acceptable to berth alongside another boat should there be no other spaces available at a mooring. Please remember to use your fenders. If you berth alongside another vessel, please do not leave your boat unattended without advising the crew onboard the other vessel in case they need to leave the mooring. If you do return and find your boat has been moved, this is acceptable practice with boaters, as long as the boat is tied securely and in a safe place. Jetties which are reserved especially for commercial craft will be clearly marked and this should be strictly adhered to.



Other Information

Barbeques

Please **do not use barbeques on board your boat or any jetty or pontoon**. The heat generated will cause significant, permanent damage. Always find a safe location ashore where you will not damage anything. Please ensure you tidy up properly afterward. Do not throw rubbish in the canal or overboard whilst underway; always use the litter bins provided on shore. Barbeque facilities are available ashore at Kytra Lock.

Alcohol - drink boat level is the same as Scottish drink drive

Excessive consumption of alcohol can be dangerous around water-based activities. The skipper of your vessel should always be in a fit state to safely control your vessel. Scottish Canals employees do report customers to us who they consider to be behaving in a manner which they consider to be a danger to themselves, the vessel or any third party. Unfortunately, because of the safety issues involved, if you are reported to the boatyard by Scottish Canals or any of the commercial operators, we will have no choice but to recover the vessel, in which case you will be asked to leave, no refund of hire will be issued or expenses met. Please refer to the Caley Cruisers Terms & Conditions of Hire (paragraph 18).

Good boating behaviour

Please help to keep the waterways pleasant places for everyone who uses them.

- Shut gates behind you.
- Keep dogs on a lead when ashore and always clean up if your dog fouls.
- Keep to designated footpaths.
- Don't light fires.
- Respect the wildlife.
- Please use the recycling facilities and litter bins provided; never leave litter behind or throw overboard.

Swimming

Although all our vessels have a permanently fitted boarding ladder, they are for emergency man overboard recovery use only! We do not advise swimming in the Lochs from your boat, as the water temperature is usually very cold, even in the Summer ! Swimming in the Lochs are at your own risk, but if you do want to have a dip, we suggest you gain safe access into the water somewhere safe from the shores, once your boat is moored at one of the permitted jetties or pontoon. Remember if you are swimming from the shore, be vigilant for boat traffic, its best to keep well clear of high boat traffic routes. **Note: Scottish Canals do not permit swimming in the canal.**

Wildlife

By going too fast, your waves can damage the wildlife and plants on the banks. If you see your wash hitting the bank please slow down. In spring time there may be nesting water birds, so cut your speed and keep a safe distance from the bank to avoid disturbing bird life.

Respect other waterway users

Waterways tend to be quiet, peaceful places. They are there for everyone to enjoy: boaters, people enjoying kayaking, canoeing and rowing, walkers, anglers, cyclists and all other users. Roaring engines, unnecessary use of the horn, loud music and shouting can all be a real nuisance to other people and wildlife.

Always slow down before passing other boats, whether they are moored or sailing and pay particular attention to rowing boats, kayaks and SUPs on the canal.

Vandalism and aggression

In general, the cruising area along the Caledonian Canal is very peaceful and trouble free. However, in very few urban areas things aren't as laid-back as they should be, so please be aware of this. Although a rare occurrence, one problem to watch out for is objects being thrown from banks or bridges. Please report any incidents to the Boat Yard, Scottish Canals staff or if necessary to the police on 101, in an emergency call 999.

How to avoid problems

- Watch out for vandals throwing objects.
- Keep a low profile and avoid confrontation.
- Don't moor where there could be a risk.
- Know your location in case you need to call for help.
- Have a camera and a mobile phone to hand.
- Keep valuables out of sight.

If things get difficult

- Call the police and then contact the boatyard.
- Keep a safe distance away if you can.
- Stay calm – do not antagonise the aggressors.
- Speak clearly and firmly – don't raise your voice or argue.
- Maintain eye contact and use positive responses.
- Try to be understanding and don't get involved in heated arguments.

Rubbish disposal and Recycling

Please use the recycling and litter facilities provided along the canal as marked on your navigational chart. Children may not be aware of the correct disposal so please make sure an adult is supervising. Never throw litter over board or leave behind.

You should find litter and/or recycling facilities at:

- Inverness (Caley Cruisers Boatyard)
- Dochgarroch Lock
- Drumnadrochit (village car park)
- Fort Augustus
- Laggan Locks
- Gairloch Locks
- Banavie
- Fort William

Pumping of bilges

PLEASE DO NOT PUMP YOUR BILGES!

It is a serious offence to pump your bilges into the canal or lochs (except in cases of extreme emergency). You will be liable to prosecution if you pump your contaminated water into the canal or lochs. If you have a bilge problem contact the boatyard on 01463 236402 or the Service Engineer on 07836 584149.

Section 4 - Adverse Weather Conditions

Fog

Fog can be a problem at certain times of the year, particularly around September. It can be extremely dangerous being caught out in foggy conditions as it is very easy to become disorientated making the risk of running aground much greater. The worst case scenario would be putting a hole in the boat, which in itself is an emergency situation and this would be greatly increased if the boat cannot be located due to the fog!

The best way to avoid this situation is if you can see fog in the distance do not attempt to move the boat. In the vast majority of cases, the fog will burn off during the very early part of the morning and is often gone by 10am.

If you do get caught in fog, firstly put the engine into neutral and leave running at idling speed. Put the navigation lights on and contact the boatyard, on 01463 236402. It is important we are advised of any potentially dangerous situation and being lost in fog is certainly one of them. We will need to know in which direction you are travelling and what the last landmark you passed was. Try to establish your location on the chart with the help of any known landmark. Assistance will be made extremely difficult unless you can give an accurate account of your last known location. It is therefore important to always use your navigational chart and to know where you are at any time.

As there will be no wind, you will not drift too far but we do recommend that you have a competent crew member keep a look out to make sure you don't get too close to the shore and in case there are other vessels around who may also be lost and get too close to you. The fog will usually clear pretty quickly so you should be able to get your bearings and get underway in due course.

Procedure for windy conditions

Due to the geographical location of these waters, a wind funnel effect can cause strong winds to blow up or down Loch Ness and Loch Lochy. The prevailing wind comes from the South West and can reach gale force very quickly, making the conditions very difficult for inexperienced boaters and extremely uncomfortable to be out in. As well as causing the crew and passengers discomfort, you will also run the risk of breakages on board if you sail in windy conditions.



All customers are advised to contact the boatyard in the event of very windy weather conditions and do not attempt to go onto Loch Ness or Loch Lochy when winds of Force 4 (15 mph) or above are blowing. It is recommended that all customers check with the boatyard if there is any sign of white water on the Lochs or alternatively speak to a Lock Keeper who will advise on the conditions.

If you underestimate the wind speed and venture out, do not be afraid to turn back and head for shelter. The boat's motion will be much more comfortable running with the wind. To avoid unnecessary rolling, turn as quickly as possible using full throttle and full wheel. All of our vessels are more than capable of handling any of the conditions experienced on the lochs and this manoeuvre will not cause the boat to capsize. Proceed to a safe mooring place at almost maximum revs to maintain full control.

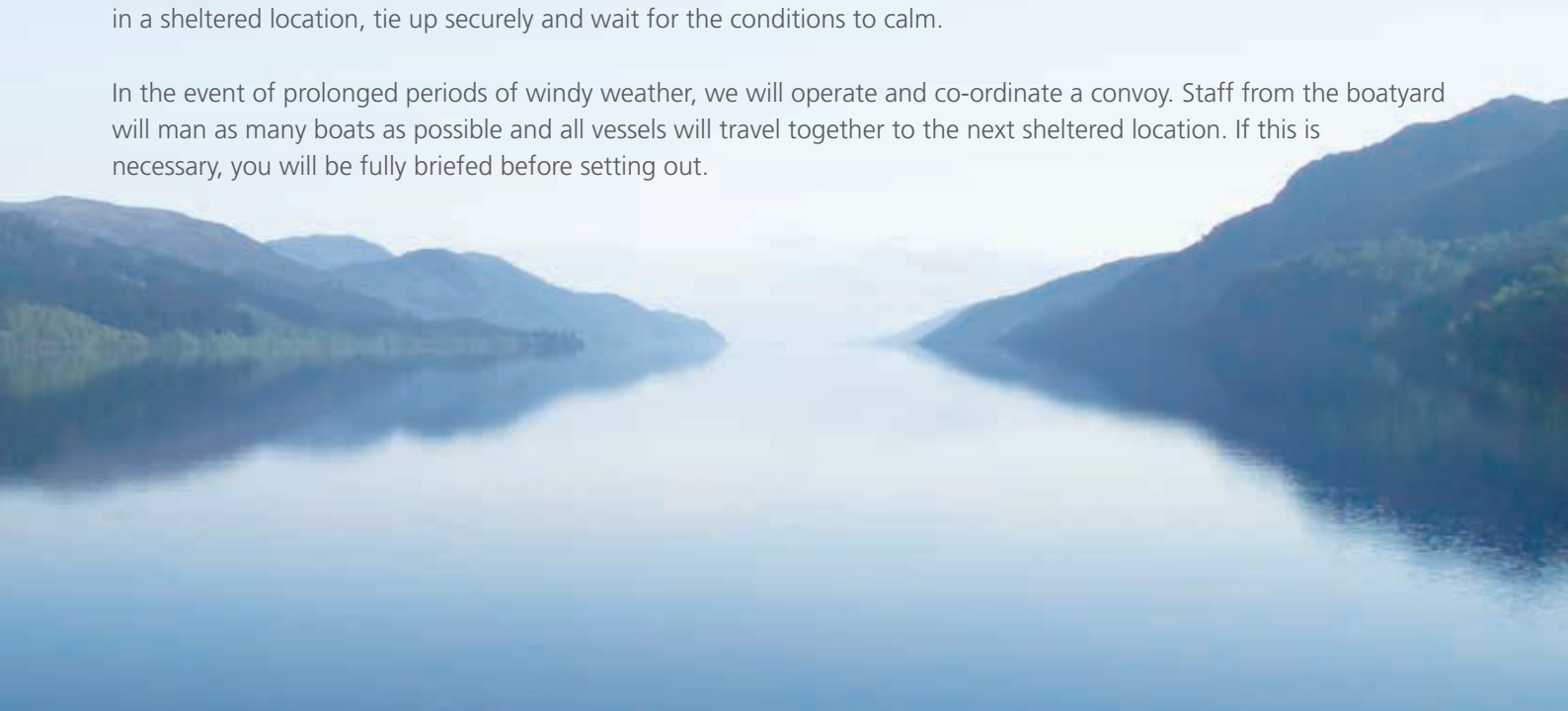
During windy conditions you must ensure that your bow and stern lines are removed completely and taken into the cockpit to avoid them falling over the side and getting tangled in the propeller; this could be extremely serious as it can cause engine failure. **Always stay in the middle of the Loch** - do not travel along the shore line where there may be a danger of being blown onto shallow water where rocks and other submerged objects can severely damage the hull of your boat. To reduce pounding, reduce speed to 2/3 throttle but maintain enough speed to maintain forward steering control.

If you do lose a rope over the side which causes the engine to stall, put your drift anchor out to its maximum and contact the boatyard immediately. Life Jackets should be worn correctly at all times in rough weather (even down below to be prepared). It is important to ensure that your boat is tidy and there is no likelihood of injury from anything falling from the shelves or other surfaces. If you have bikes stored on deck, make sure they are secured correctly prior to setting off.

In virtually all rough weather situations, however uncomfortable, you are safer remaining on board the boat. Never jump into the water and try to swim ashore. The waters of Loch Ness and Loch Lochy are extremely cold even during the summer months and you will experience the effects of hypothermia in a very short period of time.

Weather advice can be obtained from the boatyard by calling 01463 236402. We will advise what the expected weather conditions may be like and give advice as to whether it is suitable to venture out. It is important to have a mobile phone switched on. You can also get advice from the Lock Keepers in that area. Occasionally, when extreme weather is forecast/occurring, Loch Ness and Loch Lochy will be closed to hire craft. This is for your own safety and comfort and you should not vent any frustrations with the Lock Keepers issuing the advice. Normally the wind will ease after a few hours. It is unusual for windy conditions to last for any significant period of time, so it is much safer to stay in a sheltered location, tie up securely and wait for the conditions to calm.

In the event of prolonged periods of windy weather, we will operate and co-ordinate a convoy. Staff from the boatyard will man as many boats as possible and all vessels will travel together to the next sheltered location. If this is necessary, you will be fully briefed before setting out.



Beaufort Wind Scale

Force of Wind Beaufort Number	Mean Wind Speed Mph	Description of Sea Wind	Criterion	Approx Height of Waves/mtrs
0	Less than 1	Calm	Sea like a mirror	0
1	1 - 3	Light air	Ripples with the appearance of scales are formed but without foam crests.	0.1
2	4 - 7	Light breeze	Small wavelets still short but more pronounced. Crests have a glassy look but do not break.	0.1 - 0.5
3	8 - 12	Gentle breeze	Large wavelets. Crests beginning to break. Foam of a glassy appearance. Scattered white horses.	0.5 - 1.25
4	13 - 18	Moderate breeze	Small waves getting longer. Fairly frequent white horses.	1.25 - 2.0
5	19 - 24	Fresh breeze	Moderate waves, taking a longer form. Possibly some spray.	2.0 - 3.0
6	25 - 31	Strong breeze	Large waves begin to form. White foam crests are more intensive everywhere.	3.0 - 4.0
7	32 - 38	Near gale	Sea heaps up. White foam from breaking waves begins to be blown in streaks along the direction of the wind.	4.0 - 5.5

Please note: figures are for guidance only to show roughly what can be expected. In enclosed waters wave heights may be smaller and the waves steeper.

Section 5 - General Safety and First Aid

Avoiding accidents

Accidents and injuries are rare but occasionally a few people do get hurt – usually through inexperience or not paying attention. If you do have an accident or near-miss and someone is hurt, you should report it to the boatyard. Your report may notify us of a situation which could be avoided in the future. If the accident is on a pontoon, also contact a Lock Keeper.

Often the most common accidents are due to slips, trips or falls and tend to happen whether you are at home or at work. However, these types of incidents are more serious when boats are involved.

Apart from the risk of drowning if you fall off the boat, you could be dragged or fall into a moving propeller, sustain a head injury or being crushed between a boat and another object.

There is also a slight risk of infection from the water itself. Waterborne diseases, including Weil's disease (leptospirosis) are extremely rare but it is sensible to take a few precautions. If you have any cuts or scratches, keep them covered. If you fall in, take a shower and treat any cuts with antiseptic and a sterile dressing. Wash wet clothing before you wear it again. If you develop flu-like symptoms within two weeks, see your doctor and mention that you fell in the water. Not all doctors will know to look for signs of Weil's disease, so do suggest it as a possibility.

Boats and watersides are littered with bollards, rings, ropes and holes. Surfaces can be uneven or slippery, particularly in wet or icy weather or early morning dew. So you need to keep your attention focused on where you are stepping and slow down in slippery conditions.

Many falls happen during mooring – simply because people are not aware of the procedure. Please ensure you get on and off your boat safely by holding on to the hand rails and by using the step recessed into the side of the boat hull or by using the set of portable steps provided (as shown in your boat manual).

What causes falls?

- Trips over ropes.
- Walking on narrow decks on boats that tend to rock.
- Jumping off the boat or stepping off in a dangerous place.
- Slipping on a wet deck.
- Moving about the boat or waterside at night or in poor light.
- Being under the influence of alcohol.

Safety essentials

- Wear your Life Jackets securely fastened.
- Young children should also wear Life Jackets when ashore near the quayside at any mooring.
- Watch out for collisions – if you are going to bump – shout a warning to your crew and passengers.
- DO NOT stand on the bathing platform when approaching a jetty.
- Always use the grab rails.
- Keep your boat tidy – don't leave ropes or other equipment lying around.
- Don't jump off the boat when mooring – wait until you can safely step onto the jetty.
- Wear non-slip footwear, deck shoe, trainers or rubber soled shoes. Fashion shoes and Wellington boots are not suitable boating footwear.
- Take extra care on towpaths at night. Always use a torch.
- Don't leave the helm when the engine is running, if someone falls in they could be injured by the propeller.
- Never run the propeller when the boat is moored.

Collisions

Collisions – with other boats, banks, bridges or other structures – are another common cause of injury. The impact can lead to falls, both onto the deck and into the water. For anyone working in the galley, there is the risk of burns and scalds. Passengers inside the vessel may be thrown off their feet – especially the elderly or very young children – which could lead to head injuries or even broken bones.

What causes collisions?

- Lack of boat handling skill or experience.
- Taking your eyes off the waterway and not paying attention to what is going on around you.
- Cruising too fast – so, take your time, reduce the revs and SLOW DOWN.

Safety essentials

- If you are going to collide with something – shout a warning to crew and passengers.
- When mooring up or departing from a jetty ensure that no one is cooking or working in the galley and all passengers are safely seated – especially the elderly and young children.
- Slow down when approaching a mooring place – any impact will be lessened if you are going slowly. Never hurry a boat.

Crushing

If your boat collides with something, you do not want to be in the way. Never put yourself in between the boat and a jetty or pontoon or you could end up with crushed fingers or legs – or even more serious body injuries.

What causes injuries?

- Using your hands or feet to stop a collision or fend off.
- Not appreciating the momentum or size of your boat.

Safety essentials

- Don't stand on the bathing platform or boarding ladder when approaching a jetty or pontoon.
- Keep all parts of your body within the boat - don't dangle your legs or hands over the side of the boat or put your head out of the side hatch or any of the deck hatches.
- Do not stand or sit on the roof of the boat.
- Never fend off using your arms, legs or a boat hook – let the fender of the vessel take the impact.



Coastguard

HM Coastguard Service is responsible for the co-ordination of search and rescue on the lochs - it is not a breakdown and recovery service. Every call to the coastguard is classed as an emergency situation and a report for every incident involving the coastguard is reported to the Maritime & Coastguard Agency. HM Coastguard is supported on Loch Ness by the RNLI.

We consider an emergency situation when people's lives are in potential danger. Although serious we do not class a grounding incident as an emergency situation, only if the boat has been holed and there is a real danger of the vessel sinking would it be acceptable to call the coastguard. Therefore in the event of running aground you must contact the boatyard immediately so that we are made aware of the situation.

Safety equipment

In the event of losing power, which, although serious, is not necessarily an emergency, you should firstly tie your Drift Anchor securely to a bow line and throw it into the water. It will act in the same way as a parachute, keeping your boat in a controlled drift. **You must then contact the boatyard.** In the unlikely event that we are unable to be contacted, you should call the coastguard - 999.

If you require assistance and you do not have a mobile telephone on board, try to attract the attention of another vessel by using your Emergency Spot Lamp (plug in the socket on your dash panel). If a stationary vessel is seen on the loch, please try and establish contact. There may be an emergency on board; people waving could be summoning help.

If there are no other vessels around and **if someone's life is in danger** - for example if the vessel is on fire or there is a fear of the boat sinking – use a flare to attract attention. This will set off a major alert with the coastguard and a helicopter will be sent to attend. If you decide to use a flare, follow the instructions on the side of the flare. Be prepared for the red-hot ash and the smoke which spew out while the flare is burning. Always stand with the wind blowing it away from you when you let a flare off; if you stand downwind the ash will blow back in your face. Equally dangerous would be if the hot ash were to fall onto the boat, where it could start a real fire. This might create a good distress signal but would certainly compound your problems! When you activate the flare, hold it at arm's length. Keep it well out over the water where hot ash can fall harmlessly. The higher you hold it, the more likely it is to be seen.

Fire

Fire on board a boat is a frightening experience and there are plenty of highly combustible materials on board boats which can fuel a fire. Prevention is obviously better than cure; however, your boat is fitted with smoke alarm and a Co Detector. In addition there is a manual fire extinguisher located in each of the cabins and saloon. The Galley also has its own fire extinguisher and fire blanket. In the engine compartment there is an automatic fire suppression system. All the details can be found in your Boating Manual.

There are four main areas where a fire is likely to start: in the accommodation; in the galley; in the engine compartment; in the electrical circuits. Fire in the accommodation is most likely to be started by a cigarette incorrectly extinguished. Tight control of smoking on board will help to prevent this occurring. **Please remember, though, that smoking is NOT permitted inside any of our vessels (including closed canopy areas on deck).** In the galley there are always risks when there are naked flames; this area of the boat should never be left unattended when food is being cooked. Always turn the cooker and the gas off after use.

Fighting a Fire

In the event of a fire, turn off the gas bottles and tackle the fire with whichever method is most suitable from the ones below.

The best methods for fighting a fire onboard are with a fire blanket, a fire extinguisher and water.

Fire blanket

This is probably the best way of dealing with a fire in the galley area. The blanket is made of a fire resistant material; it is draped over the fire and extinguishes it by cutting off the oxygen supply.

To use the fire blanket

Take a release tape in each hand and pull downwards and outwards. Drape the blanket over the flames to seal off the air. Switch off any cooker controls and gas bottle at the supply. Leave the blanket in position until the area is cool.

If a person's clothing is on fire, place the person on the ground and wrap them in the blanket.
Call 999 for medical aid and treat for shock.

Fire extinguisher

Follow the operating instructions on the extinguisher. Once an extinguisher has been used, areas which have been exposed to the powder will require thorough ventilation and cleaning, and the boat must be assessed for damage, so please contact your boat yard.

Life Jackets

After check-in, all crew on board your boat, will have been fitted out with the appropriate size of Life Jacket by your instructor. You would also have been shown how to wear it correctly, whether this is the orange floatation Life Jacket or the automatic Life Jacket.

If you are using the automatic Life Jackets, please refer to your Boat Manual with regards to wear and care.

Before leaving the boat yard, please ensure all those on deck are correctly wearing their own Life Jackets. A Life Jacket should not feel too baggy, but should fit snugly around your torso and this can be done by fully zipping up the jacket and adjusting the waist strap accordingly. In addition, the crotch strap should be attached and adjusted so that it is not too tight! This strap is important, as it prevents your Life Jacket from potentially slipping up. You should be able to wear your Life Jacket over your jacket underneath.

Always keep the Life Jackets in a convenient place. They should be worn when you are involved in any deck work and certainly when locking and mooring. Children should be advised to wear Life Jackets at all times when on deck and when ashore near the quayside at any mooring.

NOTE: The lochs are very cold and within minutes you would not be able to move. Even a very strong swimmer would have difficulty swimming or floating when fully clothed, especially in wet weather conditions or when wearing heavy or padded clothing. **Therefore, please always wear your Life Jackets when underway and on deck.**

In addition, sensible shoes should be worn on deck. Trainers or any rubber soled, non-slip footwear is ideal. Fashion shoes and Wellington boots are not recommended for wearing on deck.

The suggestions below are most suitable for lochs and canals. On all waterways where locks are encountered extra care should be taken while these are being negotiated. In general – prevention is better than cure.

- **Wear your Life Jacket at all times when you are out on deck.**
- Wear non-slip footwear.
- When moving about the deck, use the handrails to aid balance.
- If working about the deck, keep your weight low by kneeling.

Caley Cruisers suggested man overboard procedure rescue procedure

The crew member who first spots the person in the water should call out 'man overboard – port' or 'starboard' (left or right when looking forward) and at the same time point at the person. That crew member should then maintain a constant watch on the position of the person in the water and keep pointing at the person. If they are not too far away, throw a lifebelt or other buoyant material, such as a fender, near to – not at – the person.

On hearing the call 'man overboard' and the location 'port' or 'starboard', the helmsman must immediately turn in the direction of the casualty (this takes the propeller away from the person in the water) and start heading towards the person, directed by the first crew member who is keeping a watch on the person overboard.

Approach slowly and when near enough, throw a lifebuoy with the rope attached while holding onto the end of the rope, do not let go. Alternatively throw a deck rope to the casualty in the water.

Once in position, stop the engine. Try to keep the person in the water in the lee of the boat (the side on which the wind is not blowing). While holding onto the line or rope with the casualty holding the other end, pull the person towards the stern where the safety ladder is located.

The propeller is located close to the stern. This is the reason why the engine should be turned off. If the engine is left in gear, the casualty could get pulled into the prop and be very seriously hurt!

Assist the casualty towards the ladder, which is permanently attached to the boarding platform. **DO NOT USE the stern thruster** when the casualty is close to the back of the boat. **Please refer to your Boat Manual for its location** and use, as each class of boat has different types of boarding platforms. Once the ladder is fully deployed, assist the casualty up the ladder. Please ensure that the crew involved with the rescue are correctly wearing their own Life Jackets!

- Make sure that everyone involved in the rescue is wearing Life Jackets, gloves and non-slip footwear.
- Once the person is on board, check for injuries and shock and keep the person warm – remove wet clothing and replace with layers of warm, dry clothes and supply small sips of warm or hot drinks.
- Designate 2 crew members to look after the casualty. They should at least know to look for signs of shock.
- In the event of **any type of man-overboard situation**, emergency assistance should be contacted immediately **by calling 999**.

If you fall overboard remember float to live. Scan to find out how to keep you and your loved ones safe with the RNLI.



Exposure

If a person falls in the water and stays there any **longer than 5 minutes**, it is quite likely that he or she will **suffer from exposure**. This involves a general lowering of the body temperature and can be fatal. Exposure is usually recognised by 'drunken' symptoms – unsteady balance, slurred speech, an inability to control limbs and so on. The correct way to treat a person is to dry them off and place in a sleeping bag or preferably 2 with another person in the bag to give warmth from body heat at a slow rate. **DO NOT** place hot water bottles directly against the person or give alcohol – a little warm tea can be given if asked for. Monitor casualty and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

Emergency evacuation and use of floatation devices

Your vessel is fitted with floatation devices to enable full evacuation of your vessel. Due to the dangers of exposure, you must never consider abandoning the vessel unless it is **rapidly on fire or in imminent danger of sinking**. In an emergency situation, the coastguard is responsible for co-ordinating the rescue. They should be contacted by telephone using 999. Setting off a flare will also create a full emergency alert. Should you require to use the life floats, lift up and pull as indicated on the device. Your vessel is also equipped with lifebelts for use in emergency situations.

Post codes for medical emergencies

Should you have a medical emergency and require the assistance of an ambulance the telephone operator will require a post code as well as your exact location to enable the ambulance to reach you. You can find a list of the emergency and useful telephone numbers in your boat manual.

Caley Cruisers Boatyard	IV3 8NF
Tomnahurich/Torvean Bridge	IV3 5TD
Dochgarroch Locks	IV3 8JG
Clansman Harbour	IV3 8LA
Urquhart Bay Harbour	IV63 6XR
Foyers	IV2 6YE
Fort Augustus Flight	PH32 4DD
Kytra Lock	PH32 4BT
Cullochy Locks/Aberchalder Bridge	PH35 4HN
Glengarry Castle	PH35 4HW
Well of Seven Heads	PH34 4EB
Great Glen Water Park	PH34 4EA
Laggan Locks/Le Boat	PH34 4EB
Gairlochy Locks	PH34 4EQ
Moy Bridge	PH33 7PD
Banavie Locks	PH33 7NG

Should any of your crew be unfortunate to have an accident requiring emergency treatment, please also inform the Caley Cruisers Boatyard 01463 236402.





CALEY CRUISERS

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Nautic-Tours

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