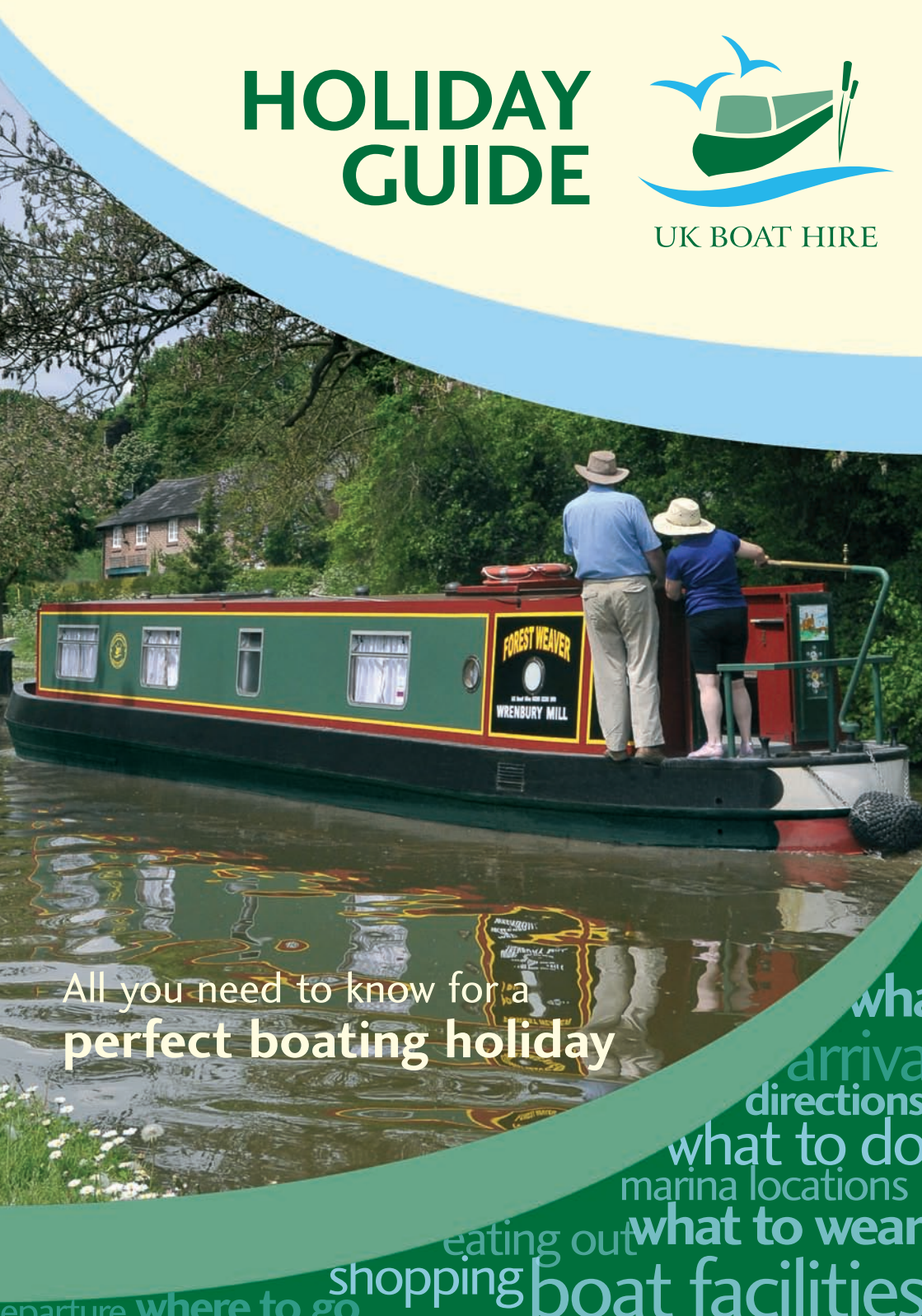


HOLIDAY GUIDE



UK BOAT HIRE



All you need to know for a
perfect boating holiday

what to do
arrival
directions
marina locations
what to wear
eating out
shopping
boat facilities
departure where to go

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for booking your holiday with UK Boat Hire. We hope you have a wonderful experience exploring some of the beautiful waterways of England, Scotland and Wales.

This holiday guide is intended to help you enjoy your narrowboat holiday by ensuring that you are able to prepare yourself fully before you arrive at the marina. Each of our boats is also equipped with a comprehensive manual containing further local information and instructions specific to your particular boat. Any boat handling and navigation instructions given are intended to complement 'The Boater's Handbook' published by British Waterways. Please can you ensure that you and all of your crew carefully read 'The Boater's Handbook' before you start your holiday. You will be asked to sign and confirm that you have read this for health and safety purposes.

If it is your first canal holiday, please DON'T WORRY. Our experienced staff will ensure that everything is explained and demonstrated and you will be given practical instruction in boat handling at the start of your cruise. Extra copies of this guide, which also contains directions to and contact details for your start base, and the Boater's Handbook, can be downloaded at www.ukboathire.com/downloads.htm.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

We will endeavour to have your boat ready for you to take over at 3:00pm. If for any reason you are unable to arrive until after 4:30pm please telephone the Boatyard in advance. An additional charge will apply after 5:00pm and we may not be able to complete the handover until the next morning. Under no circumstances can we allow a boat to depart without a full demonstration.

Please report to reception upon arrival. When your boat is ready, our staff will be pleased to show you on board and leave you to stow everything away. When you are unpacked and ready one of our staff will show you through the boat and explain how everything works, then see you safely on your way (a copy of these instructions will be in the boat manual in case you forget anything). Also included in the manual is a copy of the boat's inventory which we ask you to check to satisfy yourself that everything is present and in good order before you leave.

There is ample parking at each of our bases, but all parking arrangements are at your own risk.

RETURN

Your boat should be returned to the marina by no later than 9:30am on the final day. It is very important that boats are not handed back late as the whole turnaround routine depends on boats being available at the correct time. Late returns will be charged for and can mean that there is insufficient time to properly prepare the boat before the next guests arrive. When you have removed all your belongings please call at reception. We would very much like to hear about your holiday experience before you depart. If you wish to depart on your last night please inform the Boatyard in advance so they can provide instructions for the car park and boat keys.

CLEANING

A most important factor in getting the boat ready on time for the next holiday is the condition in which it is returned. We do ask that the boat is left in a clean and tidy condition with all items back in their original place. Please dispose of all your rubbish in our on-site refuse containers or, if available, recycling facilities. Ask marina staff if you are unsure where these are located.

CRUISING LICENCES

Our boats are licensed for all the canals and rivers governed by British Waterways (about 2,200 miles), but not for a few other waterways. This means that if you plan to cruise the Rivers Avon, Thames or Nene, you will need to pay for a short term visitor's licence. We will be pleased to advise you, when you collect your boat, on current procedures and costs. Our boats are not allowed to navigate tidal waterways except the River Thames between Brentford and Teddington in favourable conditions. If you intend to do this you need to read the River Thames Information Sheet obtainable from www.ukboathire.com/downloads.htm or our booking office.

MOORING CHARGES

Most visitor moorings on canals and rivers governed by British Waterways are free of charge. In fact, you are permitted to moor anywhere on the towpath side of the canal free of charge so long as you are not causing an obstruction. However, at certain privately owned sites there may be a fee for overnight mooring. The River Thames is a typical example, as well as parts of the Kennet and Avon canal and Bristol Dock.

FISHING LICENCES

Most of the waterways you can reach can be fished, providing you hold a national licence available from UK Post Offices. You must also purchase a day ticket from the owners of the fishing rights either in advance or from the bailiff for the water in question. For reasons of hygiene, we cannot allow you to keep live bait on the boat. **CLOSE SEASON:** Fishing is not allowed on rivers from 15th March to 15th June inclusive.

GENERAL

1. No person under the age of 18 years should operate the boat unless an adult is at the young person's side (i.e. someone above the age of 21).
2. You are not permitted to cruise after dark. The boat is not fitted with navigation lights and the insurance becomes invalid.
3. The maximum speed allowed on the canals is **4mph**. If the wash from the boat creates a wave along the bank your speed is too high.
4. The canals are a 200 year old man-made navigation system and you should always bear in mind that things can go wrong from time to time so you should always leave extra time in case of delay.
5. The waterways are a resource to be enjoyed by everyone and we would ask you to respect other users. Please slow down when going past other boats, particularly when moored.
6. Fishermen generally prefer you to slow down when going past them, but it is important that you try to stay in the centre of the canal where the water is deepest.
7. Please note that neither the boat or locks should be operated by the helmsman or crew while they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

PETS

Your pets are welcome on board subject to notification and payment where appropriate before the start of your holiday (maximum two per boat unless otherwise agreed in advance), but we do ask that you keep them off the beds, seats and soft furnishings. An extra charge may also be made if additional cleaning is required, or if they cause any damage.

RUBBISH DISPOSAL

There are plenty of disposal points along the waterways so please use them. Most boatyards will provide facilities (sometimes at a small charge) if you cannot locate a British Waterways disposal point. Do not spoil the enjoyment of others by throwing your litter in the canal or leaving it on the canal bank.

WHAT TO WEAR AND BRING

A canal holiday is very informal so bring casual, comfortable clothes suitable for operating the boat and locks. These will tend to be T-shirts and jeans, or trousers, with shorts for hotter days. A good sweater or coat is also useful for cold mornings or evenings, as are gloves when operating locks. Gardening type gloves are ideal. The most important item of clothing for the holiday is a pair of non-slip, flat rubber soled shoes. Trainers etc, are suitable, but not leather or hard soled shoes – a shoe with a firm grip will avoid slips around the boat and locks. Other items we recommend you bring are waterproof clothing such as anoraks, sunglasses to avoid glare off the water, a washing bag and nightwear. A pair of boots can also be useful especially if you want to do any walking.

Your boat will be fully equipped with all the necessary crockery, cutlery and cooking utensils. All of our boats have CD and DVD player, so you can bring a supply of your favourite CDs or DVDs with you. Freshly laundered bed linen is provided on all the boats including duvets, duvet covers, bottom sheets, pillows and pillow cases.

TOWELS: The arrangements for towels differ across the boat fleets. Alvechurch Waterway Holidays, Reading Marine, Red Line and Wessex Narrowboats provide a medium size towel per person and a hand towel per bathroom for all guests. Viking Afloat DO NOT PROVIDE ANY TOWELS except if you are an overseas visitor.

LUGGAGE: We recommend that your luggage is of the soft bag type as large suitcases are difficult to store on the boat. Where this is not possible we suggest that you leave suitcases in your car.

BUOYANCY AIDS

Buoyancy aids/lifejackets are provided free of charge on request at the start of your holiday. These are compulsory for non swimmers and those under 18 years of age.

SHOPPING AND FOOD

Your boat is fully equipped with all the utensils, cooker, oven, fridge etc, to enable you to cook, if you wish, to the same standards that you would at home. There is hot and cold running water in the galley and adequate room. You will be able to replenish the larder at some canal side towns and villages which you will pass and many boatyards operate a small grocery shop. It is becoming more common for supermarkets to be built near to the canals, which often have cash points so you can stock up your wallet as well as your larder!

WELCOME PACK

To enable you to enjoy your holiday to the full, we will also provide a welcome pack consisting of some washing up liquid, tea towel, bin liner, cleaning cloth, a box of matches, a cleaning agent, a toilet roll and a detailed boat manual. Please bring extra toilet rolls if you require them. No quilted or thick toilet paper please, the cheapest thinnest paper works best in boat toilets and is less likely to create an inconvenient blockage.

EATING OUT

Most of the delightful canal side pubs provide meals, but you would be well advised to telephone in advance to book a table as they are very popular with motorists as well as boaters. Please remember that not every pub takes credit cards.

WHERE TO GO AND WHAT TO DO

There is a great temptation to undertake long circular cruises or rings only to discover that it is all proving to be much harder work than you first thought. We always recommend an out and return route for beginners – many experienced boaters also prefer this. Working through the locks does take some effort and whilst this activity is part of the enjoyment of a canal cruise, you do not want to make it a chore. A cruising day of about 8 hours is the most that you should plan for, and remember that you might want some time to do other things as well.


As a rough calculation when planning a route, add the number of locks to the distance in miles and divide the total by 3 to give cruising time in hours.

Guide books for all the canals and navigable rivers are available in our marina shops and via mail order on 0330 3330 590 if you want to study the route in advance. Places of interest and the facilities you may need are listed and described alongside the maps, so you will always know in advance what is to be found around the next bend.

ROUTE AVAILABILITY

For up-to-date information on route availability please visit www.waterscape.com. The marina will also provide you with any route information when you collect the boat. Routes and timings are approximate and will be affected by available cruising hours, weather conditions and amount of traffic on the waterway. When planning any river cruising within your route, do bear in mind that in some weather conditions river navigation may be restricted, so have an alternative plan.

BOAT SERVICES AND SUPPLIES

ELECTRICITY: The boat's electrical systems are supplied by heavy duty batteries which are recharged by the propulsion engine. All the essential boat equipment including the TV operates on a 12-volt DC supply. There is, however, a 240-volt supply point for electric shavers ONLY and a 12-volt car cigar lighter socket suitable for charging mobile phones and camcorder batteries, for which you will need to bring a suitable 12-volt lead with you. Some boats (marked  in the brochure) provide a 240-volt power supply for the appliances provided. We advise against bringing your own appliances to run off the boat's 240-volt system, however, if you do so it is at your own risk. You must remember that being battery supplied, the total electrical capacity is not unlimited. You must run the engine for at least 5 hours each day to recharge the batteries which is normally done while cruising.

FUEL: Your fuel tank will be full with about 50 gallons or 225 litres of diesel fuel when you start and this will normally last more than 2 weeks. The average fuel consumption is between 10 and 20 gallons per week. If you plan to cruise for over 100 hours, ask about refuelling procedures at the start of your holiday.

DIESEL HEATING: Your boat may also have diesel heating so you should be careful not to leave it on unnecessarily. Your heating usage will obviously impact on your fuel consumption.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

We must ask you to do all you can to protect the environment by reducing exhaust emissions and obeying the **4mph** speed limit. Excessive throttle use equals noise, bank erosion and pollution. It is very easy to double the amount of throttle use yet go no further or faster than someone handling the boat with care and thought.

GAS SUPPLY

Two or more gas cylinders are carried on board the boat. Gas is used for cooking and on some boats for heating and hot water. If the boat has gas heating providing it is used wisely, you have a sufficient supply for at least one week in the coldest part of the season and plenty for two weeks in the spring and summer. Of course, if you leave the heating full on with the doors wide open you will use up your supply much sooner and possibly run out at a time and place when you cannot easily obtain replacement cylinders. For safety and legislation reasons no other portable gas appliances such as barbeques may be carried or stored on the boat.

TOILETS

All of our boats are equipped with fresh water flushing toilets designed to need emptying only once a week with average use. Should the toilet tank need emptying during the holiday it is a chargeable service that is provided by most boatyards. Having been emptied during the turnaround, the toilet should be entirely trouble free providing it is used correctly. Only human waste and toilet paper should go down the toilet.

Any other items (including sanitary articles, nappies, wet wipes, kitchen towels and quilted toilet paper) **SHOULD NOT BE FLUSHED DOWN THE TOILET**, but placed in the bags provided to hygienically transfer these items to a suitable bin. Any of the above items are likely to cause a blockage which may in turn delay your progress if an engineer has to be called. If a blockage is found to have been caused due to ignoring these instructions a charge may be made for the engineer's time.

WATER

All our boats carry around 100 gallons or 450 litres of water which is delivered to the taps by an automatic electric pump. You are advised to refill your water tank every day. This reduces the filling time, which can be lengthy at some taps and avoids the risk of running out at an inconvenient place or time. There are many water points along your route and all will be shown in the various canal cruising guides. Nearly all boatyards have water points (there may be a small charge), but do remember to ask first as there are no special rights or agreements.

TELEVISION & DVD

All of our boats are fitted with colour televisions and DVD players as a permanent feature. **Reception quality is not always good on the canals** because the aerial is generally not high enough. Your ability to get a good picture is dependent on aligning the aerial in the right direction and in selecting and tuning to the correct channel. Only trial and error will get it right and the results obtained can often be disappointing.

PAYMENT OF HOLIDAY HIRE CHARGES

The final balance of holiday payment is due 8 weeks prior to the start date of the holiday, which you may have now paid. If you have not already made payment please make it by any of the following methods in pounds sterling only:

BY CHEQUE

Cheques should be made payable to UK Boat Hire. Please write the following details on the reverse of the cheque: the booking reference number, the start date of the holiday and the class of boat. (Also include the name the booking was made in if not the same as that shown on the cheque.) Send payments to the booking office (address on the back cover).

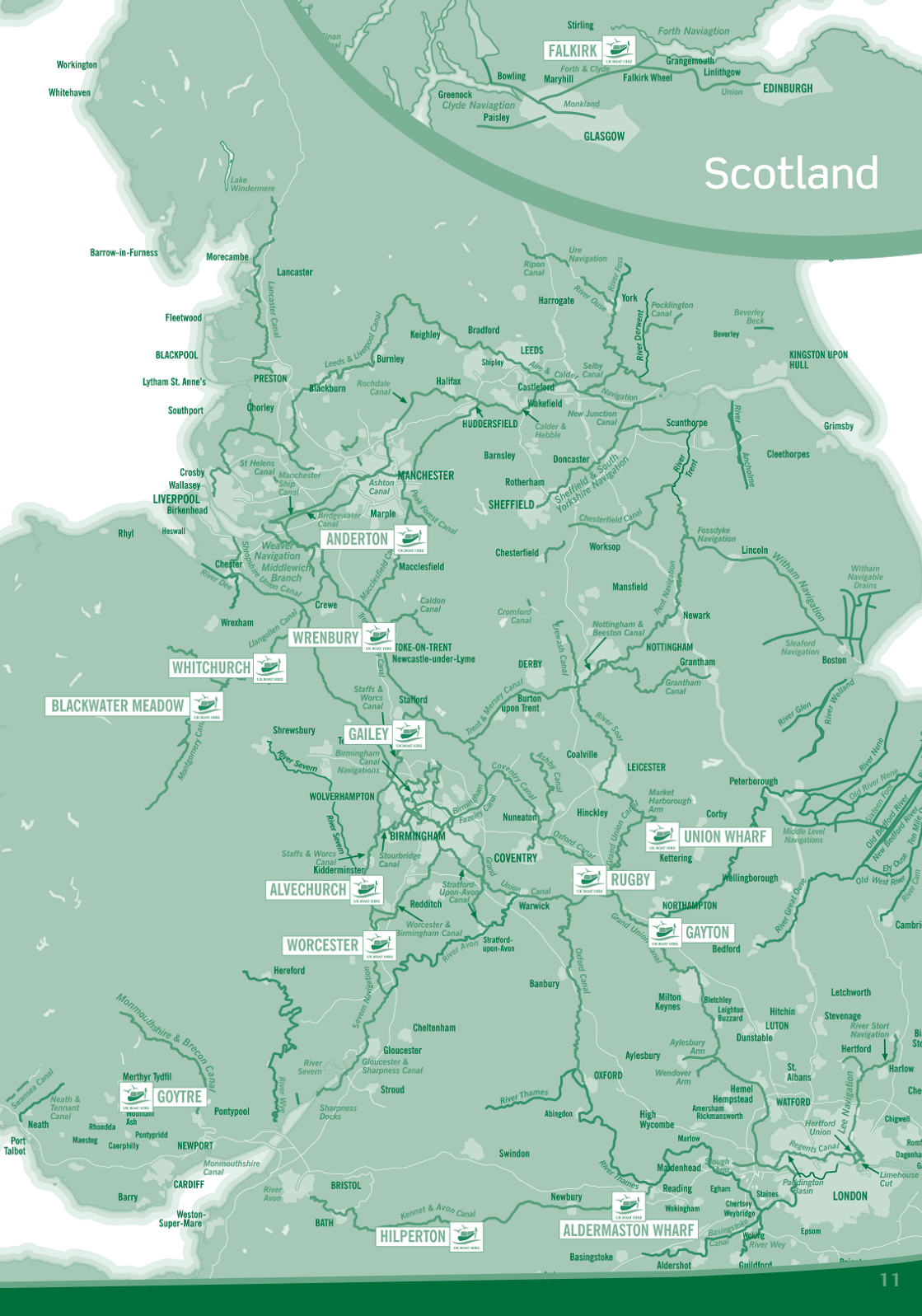
BY DEBIT OR CREDIT CARD

Payments may be made by Solo, Maestro or Delta debit cards, or by Visa or Mastercard (there will be a 2% surcharge for credit cards). Go to www.ukboathire.com to make an online payment.

NOTES ON PAYMENT FROM OVERSEAS

All payments are required in pounds sterling. Payment in any other currency and/or from a non-UK bank incurs heavy bank charges, for which you will be responsible. The best exchange rates are probably obtained by using a debit or credit card, for which you can go to www.ukboathire.com to make an online payment.

Scotland



FALKIRK
UK WATERWAYS



GLASGOW

EDINBURGH

ANDERTON
UK WATERWAYS



WRENBURY
UK WATERWAYS



BLACKWATER MEADOW
UK WATERWAYS



WHITCHURCH
UK WATERWAYS



GAILEY
UK WATERWAYS



ALVECHURCH
UK WATERWAYS



WORCESTER
UK WATERWAYS



GOYTRE
UK WATERWAYS



HILPERTON
UK WATERWAYS



ALDERMASTON WHARF
UK WATERWAYS



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UK BOAT HIRE



HELP US REDUCE WASTE!



If you don't need this booklet after your holiday, and if it's still in a clean state, please return it to the office at the end of your holiday for use by another customer.

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