

# Hampton Court Paddle

With a return length of 6 miles this route is great for a mini adventure or mini expedition, depending on how long you plan on spending at the pub! Hampton Court (The half way point) is just over 3 miles downstream from our base so remember to allow plenty of time for the return leg.

## The Trip

On leaving Shepperton Marina turn left and follow the river downstream. On your way to Hampton Court you will pass through two locks. As you approach the first lock, Sunbury, you will pass Sunbury weir on your left and see The Weir Pub on the right hand bank, this is a great spot to jump out, take a break & grab a drink. Sunbury lock, originally built in 1812 actually has 2 locks which are side by side rather than the normal one! The easiest way to portage these locks is down the punt rollers, on the left hand side of the 2 locks. Sunbury is one of the biggest weirs on the Thames so be sure to keep your distance. About half a mile after the lock you will paddle past Sunbury Court Island, where during 1938 - 1945, 170 motor torpedo boats were built for use in the second world war. You can still see the buildings on the waters edge where these boats were made. A little further down stream keep an eye out on your left for the Astoria. This grand looking house boat was originally built in 1911 for impresario Fred Karno and later adapted as a recording studio by Pink Floyds guitarist, David Gilmour. Parts of the album's "A Momentary Lapse of Reason", "Division Bell" & "Endless River" were recorded on this boat.

As you continue down the river you will pass Hurst Park on your right, this is a lovely open area perfect for a quick jump out and stretch of the legs. After this you will also pass Taggs island and Ash island.

Molesley lock (the second of the locks on this trip) is now only a short distance further down the river. Molesley Lock is easily portaged on the right bank, climb out of your boat walk around the lock and climb back in below the lock. Just after Molesley lock you will pass under the A309 road bridge, Hampton Court should now be visible on your left. Hampton Court has a long history and its construction first started here in 1515, when this was the home of "the king maker" Thomas Wolsey. Unfortunately Wolsey fell out of favour with the then king, Henry the VIII who realized he was quite fond of Hampton Court and so in 1529 seized the Palace for himself.

Almost opposite Hampton Court you will find The Albany, this is another great river side pub perfect for a quick drink or bite to eat before your return paddle back to Shepperton Marina.

To get back to Shepperton Marina turn around and retrace your paddle strokes. Remember you're now going against the river flow, keep an eye on time and if you have any problems give us a call.

On the way back you will reach Molesley lock first. Stay left and simply portage round the lock. After Molesley lock you will again pass by Ash and Taggs Island, continue upstream until you reach Sunbury lock. Here you can either portage the lock to the left or if you would like to portage back up the punt rollers stick right and keep an eye out for a small wooden jetty, here you can easily jump out and walk your boats up to above the lock. At the top of Sunbury lock cut you will pass the Weir Pub, if you have time this is a great place to grab a quick drink. Nearly back now, Shepperton Marina is approximately a further two miles up stream on your right hand side, keep your eye's peeled for entrance and if you reach Walton road bridge you've gone to far!

**\*REMEMBER\* Paddle on the right! Keep an eye out for rowing and motorized boats, any problems give us a call on **01932 247978****