

## **Advice and Information for River Users Wishing to Navigate the Tidal Hundred Foot or New Bedford River**

The Tidal Hundred Foot River or New Bedford River is tidal and runs for roughly 20 miles (33 km) linking the tidal Great Ouse River at Denver to the Bedford Ouse at Earith. This navigation provides an alternative route to the non tidal Ely Ouse and acts as a bypass around the Ely Ouse and Old West Rivers.

The legal speed limit on the navigation is 15 mph and at around this speed the channel should take somewhere in the Region of 1.5 hours to navigate. However cruising at a steady pace of around 6 to 7 mph, the typical narrowboat cruise speed, the journey will take in the region of 3 to 5 hours. Cruising times will vary according to river conditions and the direction of travel, with or against the current, flow rates vary greatly depending on the tidal and fluvial river conditions. Please note that skippers must ensure their craft are capable and that they are adequately insured and competent to navigate the tidal river and have taken advice from our Denver Lock Keeping staff. It is also recommended that craft carry a suitable anchor, **please note there are no mooring facilities on the Tidal Hundred Foot River**. The tidal nature of the river is asymmetrical and the flows produced can be very significant, under certain conditions a tidal bore can develop albeit less spectacular when compared to the Severn Estuary bore.

There are no locks on the route between Earith and Denver but to get off of the tidal river users will need to either lock through Hermitage lock or Brownhill Staunch at the Earith end and Denver or Salters Lode lock at the Denver end. Although no locks exist on the Hundred Foot River there are 7 bridges which have restricted headroom especially if water levels are high. During low water levels the reverse is true and grounding can be a problem. From the Denver end of the Hundred Foot River, the bridges encountered in order, where the typical headroom (HR) in meters (m) on High Water Springs (HWS) and High Water Neaps (HWN) are; (Also see plan overleaf)

1. **Welney Wetland Observation Platform Footbridge: (HR: 3.5m HWS & 4.5m HWN)**
2. **A1101 Welney Road Bridge: (HR: 2.4m HWS & 3.85m HWN)**
3. **Railway Bridge: (HR: 2.65m HWS & 4.1m HWN)**
4. **Mepal Old Road Bridge: (HR: 2.8m HWS & 4.1m HWN)**
5. **A142 Mepal Road Bridge (HR: 3.3m HWS & 4.3m HWN)**
6. **Sutton Gault Road Bridge (HR: 2.9m HWS & 4.05 HWN)**
7. **A1123 Earith Road Bridge (HR: 3.7m HWS & 4.6m HWN)**

**Please note the air drafts quoted are only indicative, you are strongly advised to contact Denver Lock Staff prior to any passage to obtain the latest level status. We are currently in the process of fitting inverted gauge boards to the bridges crossing the Hundred-Foot (New Bedford) River.**

Passage needs to be timed to coincide with the tide and to exit the river at the Denver end through either Denver or Salters Lode lock. **It is therefore essential that anyone wanting to use the Hundred Foot River makes contact with our Denver Complex staff before setting off along the navigation.**

People can do this either in person at Denver or Salters Lode if wanting to travel in the Denver to Earith direction or by laying up at Hermitage lock if wanting to travel in the Earith to Denver direction.

Alternatively people can speak to our staff directly at Denver using the following methods:

- **IN THE FIRST INSTANCE CONTACT THE DENVER LOCK KEEPER: 01366 382 340**, if the office is unattended please leave a message on the answer phone and wait for our staff to call you back. As an alternative you can also contact the **Denver Complex Sluice Office** on **01366 382 013**. When the lock office is manned VHF Channels 16 and 73 are operated but phone contact is preferred.

It is very important that people looking to make this tidal passage are directed towards speaking to us first. Should anyone have any more general enquiries about the Hundred Foot River or the Ely Ouse, they can be directed to Mervyn Day or Roger Mungham our River Inspectors for the area. The River Inspectors know a great deal about their local patches including available facilities, navigation closures, restrictions and general advice on river and navigation related issues. To contact them please use the following numbers:

- **Mervyn Day: 07889 111 829**

In an emergency you can contact the Environment Agency 24 hours a day on the following hotline:

- Environment Agency Incident Hotline: 0800 80 70 60

The plan below shows the Hundred Foot (New Bedford) Tidal Navigation and associated structures ▼ .

