

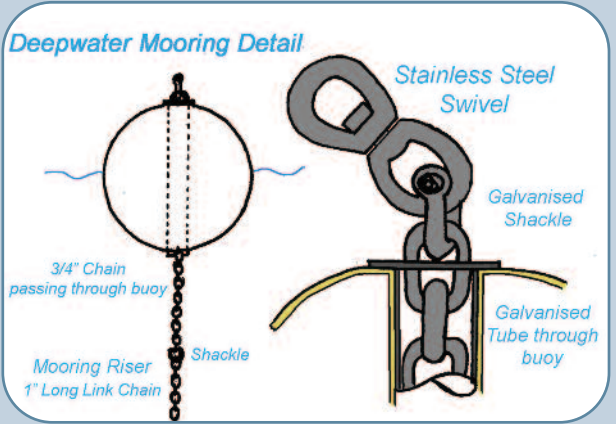
Guide to Using a Swinging Mooring in Chichester Harbour



Chichester Harbour Conservancy
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Mooring Equipment

A Conservancy maintained mooring consists of a heavy black iron chain riser, which is attached to a sinker or ground chain. The swivel allows the boat to swing freely at the mooring without twisting or snagging the mooring top chain and any ropes passed to the swivel.



The length of the top chain is standardised to suit the average deck layout of a typical yacht using our moorings and is approximately 2.5m long. The length of top chain will not suit all deck arrangements and it may need to be adjusted to suit your individual requirement. It can be shortened by increasing the size of the end loop; or on rare occasions, lengthened by introducing an additional length to the chain.



Considerations When Securing to a Buoy



Moored boats behave in different ways; characteristics such as hull shape and draft will affect how a boat lies at the mooring during changes in the tide. Windage on spray hoods and canvas covers, will be affected by the strength of the wind and wind direction, which also plays a part in creating a unique swinging pattern and how the vessel lies with neighbouring boats.

Minimising the swinging circle is an important consideration. The length of the mooring top chain between the deck fairlead and the buoy should be as short as possible. This also ensures that the weight of the boat is directly linked to the riser and limits the amount of snatch to the boat deck fittings.

An excessively long top chain will also cause the buoy to rub alongside the hull of the boat and scuff the gel coat or varnish. This is often observed and can be reduced by using the correct length of top chain as previously described.



Mooring Swivel

It is important that the swivel on the top of the buoy is free to rotate and that nothing is attached from the boat below this swivel, such as a rope preventer.



A rope secured directly to the buoy will quickly foul the swivel and cause the top chain to twist and shorten, which then hampers the free swinging of the boat at the mooring.

Any boat using a mooring must have insurance against third-party claims for at least the minimum sum recommended by leading marine insurers.

Deck Arrangements

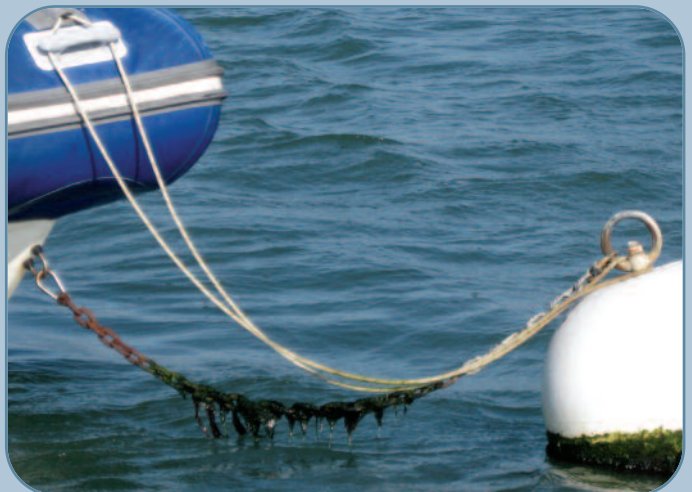
There are many variations of deck layouts and each will have its own considerations when securing to a swinging mooring. The most effective arrangement is one with a bow fairlead; this enables a straight pull to a deck fairlead or Samson post. The mooring top chain should lie on the roller with a drop nose pin or lashing above the chain to prevent the chain from jumping out of the fairlead. It is important that the pin does not interfere with the movement of the chain or take any weight.

Where the top chain is fed through a fairlead mounted on the port or starboard side of the boat, the fairleads should be large enough to permit the

chain to move through the fairlead and not to take the weight of the mooring directly.

Alternatively a rope bridle attached to the mooring buoy, above the mooring swivel, could be used; the rope bridle can be adjusted so that the rope would take the weight of the boat in normal conditions. It is important that the galvanised top chain is fitted to the boat in some manner, so that if the rope bridle fails the boat remains safely moored.

Small boats that are not fitted with suitable deck arrangements to secure the buoy top chain can secure the chain to the bow 'D' ring (the steel ring on the bow of the boat that is used to pull the boat on to a trailer); a stainless steel snap shackle fitted to the top chain is the simplest way of achieving this. A rope bridle can then be fitted from the boat to adjust and manage the safe mooring of the boat to the buoy.



Preventers

Some boat owners prefer to fit a rope bridle, in addition to the top chain; this can help to minimise the wear effect that the top chain may have on rollers and fairleads. A plastic tube fitted where the line passes through the fairlead/roller, can also reduce chaff. The fitting of spring or rubber snubbers favoured by some boat owners is also an option.



Drogues

For light displacement boats or boats with a high free board, which have a tendency to ride with the wind rather than the tide, it is recommended that a drogue be fitted at the stern of the boat. This can be a plastic bucket or canvas bag on a short length of line and will have the effect of slowing down the rate of swing.

Private Moorings

All moorings are categorised by the maximum length of vessel authorised by the mooring site licence issued by the Conservancy. Whilst a mooring may be classified as a C3, for instance a half tide mooring for a vessel up to 9m, this is subject to local conditions and spacing with adjacent moorings. It should be borne in mind how a boat will sit when drying and re-floating on the change of tide.

NB: Details in the Conditions of Site Licence or Hire of a mooring should be read carefully by any boat owner using a mooring with regard his own liability.

The most common cause of a boat breaking away from a mooring is the failure of rope bridles; these should be thoroughly checked at regular intervals.

Deck fittings, which are subjected to high forces, should also be checked regularly.

Provisions for Rough Weather

If the advice in this leaflet is followed a yacht will be well prepared for rough weather. However, there are a number of additional precautions that should be considered; yachtsmen should be aware of the wind loading effect caused by spray hoods, loose/flapping sails and the potential for damage to equipment not securely fastened. Ideally sails, sail covers and any loose deck equipment should be removed from the boat during the autumn and winter months. If you do leave sails on under a sail cover, this should be securely lashed with all loose ends tied. Furling headsails should be tightly stowed with the sheets wrapped around the sail at least once and any loose ropes tied down.

Boats with lifting keels on a deepwater mooring should keep their keels down. This is particularly important for light displacement yachts, which could be knocked down in strong winds.



Tori Chitty

Should you have any further queries about the best way to safely moor your boat, please contact the Moorings Officer at the Harbour Office - 01243 510980



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