

# A Guide to Quanting

The quant is the pole used to push the boat when there is no wind or you need to manoeuvre in a confined space. It is about 15-20 ft long with a bott (knob) and one end to push on and a foot at the other end to stop it sinking too far into the mud. It is used for a straight push and is likely to break if used as a lever.

To use the quant, stand on the deck near the shrouds holding the quant vertical (bott uppermost!). Drop the quant about 2 ft out from the boat, letting it slide through your hands. When the foot hits the bottom the boat will have moved forward so the quant is now not vertical. Use it to push the boat forward working your hands up the shaft until you can put the bott in your shoulder. Lean on the quant and push the boat forward as you walk towards the stern.

At the end of the push, twist the quant to release it from the mud. Walk forwards pulling the quant behind you. As you approach the shrouds swing the quant into the vertical position ready for the next push. This will become an easy, flowing movement with practice.

If the boat is stationary when quanting starts, always start with the first push while standing on the aft deck otherwise you will just push the boat sideways rather than forwards.

## Some tips:

Before quanting with the sails stowed ensure that the boom and crutches are securely pulled down with the mainsheet. You can then use the boom to steady yourself without fear of it giving way and encouraging you to swim.

Drop the quant through your hands - don't lower it hand-over-hand or it may just float up again.

Always quant on the lee side if you can when it is windy. This will help to keep the boat on course.

'Feel' the bottom before pushing and gauge how hard to push. If the bottom is hard, the foot might slip; if the bottom is very muddy it may be difficult to pull the quant out if you have pushed too hard. If the quant sticks let go and stay on the boat unless you want a swim.

Don't try to quant fast. The boat will have a natural speed and the extra energy used to try to go faster will be very tiring.

Try always to keep your hands below your elbows otherwise the water on the quant when you let it slip through your hands will run up (down?) your arms and you will get very wet.

The helmsman must play a part in quanting. Keep a straight course when the quant is being pushed and make any turns between pushes otherwise the quant may run under the hull and tip the quarter in the river.

If you are lucky enough to be double quanting with one person on each side, try to keep in unison as this will make steering easier.

If by chance you break a quant, bring the bits back to the Yard as quants are always repairable even if the bits of two broken quants are used to make one new one.

And finally, Byelaw 23 states that motor boats and sailing boats must give way to a boat quanting, whether or not it has its sails up (Broads Authority Navigation Byelaws 1995).