Lunch by the lock

There is a definite holiday feel in the vicinity of the Old Stables Tea Rooms at Paper Mill Lock. On a sunny day it seems the world and his wife are there, all following their own particular leisure pursuits, be it boating, canoeing, jogging, walking, fishing or painting. But the one thing they all seem to have in common is a love of tea and cake!

Paper Mill Lock and its tea rooms have been something of an institution for over twenty years. The lock-side location is beautiful, with the canal creating a truly dynamic natural landscape: swans serenely glide across the water avoiding the pretty narrow boats and barges moored



alongside. Dogs drag their owners for a walk along the towpaths. There is plentiful seating both in and outside the tea rooms, with a covered terrace for rainy days.

Staff at the Old Stables are kept busy, particularly during the summer months. A good selection of sandwiches, toasties and French sticks, with fillings ranging from sausage and onion to brie and cranberry, are on the menu, together with a hearty ploughman's lunch.

Moving on to the aforementioned cake – the selection is grand

with carrot and orange proving a favourite, and of course the ever popular cream tea with homemade scones always goes down well with a cup of tea or coffee.

An outing here really is a treat for the eyes and the taste buds – and your dog can get a drink of water too – drinking bowls are always provided outside.

One of the advantages of working at the Old Stables Tea Rooms is an opportunity to cool off after a particularly hot summer's day.... the staff simply jump in the lock!

North Hill, Little Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 4BS Tel: 01245 225520. Open daily from 10am throughout the year. Ample parking. Disabled access. www.papermilllock.co.uk