

PLA EBB TIDE FLAG WARNING ADVICE

The PLA has established a warning system based on the tidal observed at Richmond Lock low water. The advice is updated daily at 06:00 and is readily available as an internet based widget on both homepages of: www.boatingonthames.co.uk and www.pla.co.uk.

There are three main levels of advice, which are:

- RED FLAG – Extreme Caution – EBB TIDE Very Strong Fluvial Flows
- YELLOW FLAG – Caution – EBB TIDE Strong Fluvial Flows
- GREEN FLAG – Average Fluvial Flow Conditions

In addition there is a fourth level (BLACK FLAG) of advice for all river users to note: when there are low fluvial flows and the Richmond Lock All low water reads below 0m. This usually occurs when the fluvial flow rate is less than usual at Teddington Weir and the upper reaches of the tide way can expect lower than predicted tidal levels.

Teddington to Broadness

NAVIGATION ABOVE PUTNEY BRIDGE

Rowing Navigation Buoys

There is a 1m deep channel, the edge of which is marked by 15 red and 4 green buoys between Putney and Brentford. (See current Permanent Notice to Mariners for more information)

These ensure the segregation of rowing craft from other river users and should be treated as ordinary port and starboard lateral marks. If you are a non-rowing river user, you should stay within this marked channel and avoid navigating between the buoys and the shore (the inshore zone).

Recreational Craft

The river can be a lot of recreational boats on the move above Putney Bridge, particularly at weekends. Motor vessels must stay within the 8 knot limit at all times and pay attention to their wash. All users of paddle powered craft must be familiar with the relevant code of practice, available on our website www.boatingonthames.co.uk

River Events

The area of river between Putney Bridge and Isleworth Ait is home to regattas and professional rowing events including the Boat Race and the Great River Race. These events can lead to navigational restrictions and

Reduced Upriver Depths

In prolonged dry weather periods, water rates flowing over Teddington Weir are often significantly reduced. This means that depths at low water in the upper reaches of the tidal Thames may be much lower than predicted. All river users must take the potential of reduced depths into account at such times and to check on the latest PLA advice published on: www.boatingonthames.co.uk. It is also very important to keep well clear of larger vessels that have limited space to manoeuvre.

Mortlake and Syon Reach - Navigation in the vicinity of Kew Road Bridge and Pier

The river can be very busy around Kew Bridge with rowers, leisure boats, Stand-Up Paddleboarding and larger passenger boats manoeuvring on and off Kew Pier. Visibility is also greatly restricted by Kew Bridge which is on a bend in the river.

Drivers of motor vessels must sound one prolonged blast when approaching the bridge from either direction and when leaving Kew Pier. Whichever vessel you are in, you should keep a **good lookout**, navigate with extreme caution and listen carefully for sound signals.

NAVIGATION RULES

You must comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (the COLREGS) - as modified by the 'Port of London Thames Byelaws' - when navigating on the tidal Thames. As the person in charge of a vessel, you must also comply with the 'General Directions for Navigation in the Port of London'. Copies of these publications can be downloaded, free of charge, from the PLA website - www.pla.co.uk.

The following basic navigational rules are of particular relevance to recreational users:

- Keep to Starboard - you should keep as far to the right of the river as you can, given any draught limitation and navigational constraints.
- Obey the COLREGS - in particular, your vessel must display the appropriate navigation lights.
- Right of Way - if your vessel is approaching or passing under any bridge or bend while going against the tide, you should give way to vessels which are moving with the tide.
- Large Vessels - small craft must not hamper the passage of vessels which can only navigate within a main navigation channel or through a marked bridge arch.
- Crossing the Channel - you must not enter or cross a fairway so as to impede a vessel that can only proceed along that fairway.
- Wash - be aware of what your wash is doing, both to other users and the banks and foreshore. If necessary, **reduce speed**.
- VHF Radio - vessels over 13.7m in length must carry and use a VHF radio (see VHF requirements).
- Novices - complete a training course for your chosen activity before attempting to navigate the tidal Thames.
- Person in Charge - a competent person must be in charge of your vessel at all times. No person under 16 years of age should be in charge of a powered vessel capable of exceeding 8 knots or having an engine rated at over 10hp.
- Anchoring - when not underway, your vessel must be moored securely, or anchored given the prevailing or forecast conditions.
- Anchors - your vessel must be equipped with one or more anchors and have working lights (unless it is less than 7m in length or a rowing boat).
- Drink and Drugs - your vessel must not be navigated by a person who is under the influence of drink and/or drugs.
- Name of Vessel - your vessel's name must be displayed clearly.
- Tidal Stream - be aware that the river can flow at a speed of up to 4 knots.

Anyone navigating a vessel without due care and attention, or in such a manner as to cause injury to others, or damage to vessels, property, or the river banks, is committing an offence and will be prosecuted.

SPEED LIMITS – THAMES BYELAW 16

When navigating on the tidal Thames you must ensure you proceed at a safe speed at all times. You must also take the prevailing wind and tidal conditions, the size and type of your vessel, your location in the river, and the safety of others into account. In addition a mandatory speed limit of 12 knots applies between Margaretness and Wandsworth Bridge. See Thames Byelaw 16.3d and 16.4. A mandatory 8 knot speed limit also applies in the following places:

- above Wandsworth Bridge;
- in all creeks linked to the tidal Thames; and
- off Shroton (in the inshore area).

See Thames Byelaw 16.2.

Remember - your wash is your responsibility! Even at 8 knots, many vessels can create an unacceptable amount of wash and you may need to reduce your speed further in the vicinity of piers, smaller craft, or river works. When there are local speed restrictions, London VTS will broadcast this information during regular bulletins on VHF Channel 14. You should maintain a good lookout and be mindful of your wash when passing these activities.

Additionally there is an advisory at Coryton and Thurrock when gas tankers are berthed, please refer to Permanent Notice to Mariner for further information.

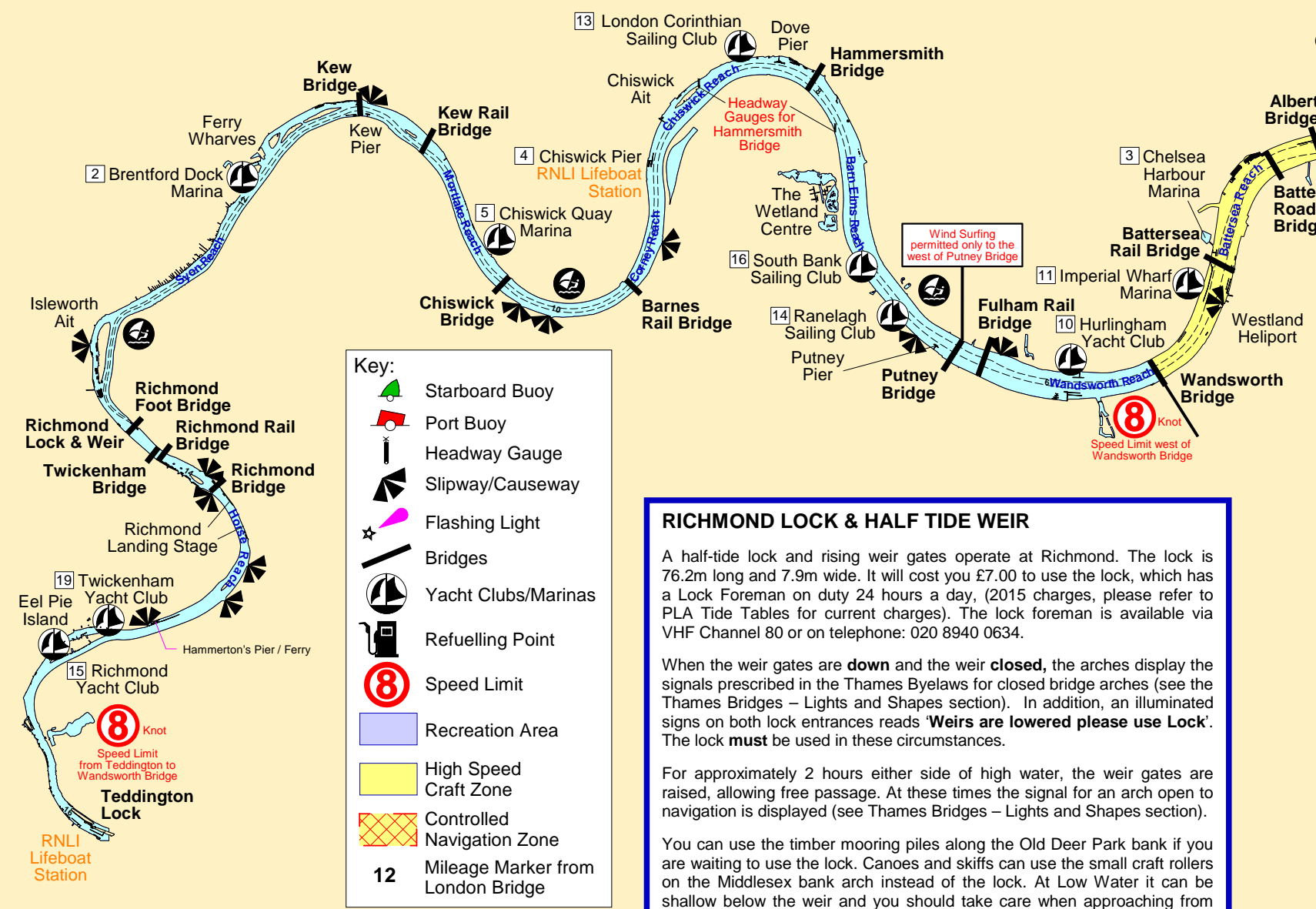
HIGH SPEED CRAFT ZONES

A High Speed Craft Zone exists in two areas (marked in yellow) between Margaretness and Wandsworth Bridge. In these areas only authorised vessels that comply with the Thames Byelaws requirements and have been issued with a Certificate of Compliance are allowed to exceed the speed limit. Vessels currently authorised, include; passenger vessels, RIBs and other craft operate at speed.

The first zone is between Margaretness and St Saviour's Dock where Certificate of Compliance vessels may be travelling at up to 30 knots and will display an all-round yellow flashing light when travelling at speed.

The second zone is between Lambeth Bridge and Wandsworth Bridge where vessels may be travelling at up to 25 knots and will display an all-round yellow flashing light when travelling at speed.

In these areas you should stay as far to the starboard side of the channel as possible, keep a good lookout, and take the increased closing speed of the vessels into account in these areas.



MARINE SURVEYORS
How can we be of service?

We survey over 730 commercially operated vessels a year. Our Marine Surveyors are also able to provide services for third parties on commercial vessels which include:

- New Build Consultancy
- Inland Waterways Certification
- Surveys can be completed anywhere in the UK and Europe, usually within two weeks of receiving instruction.
- Certification under the MCA Small Services
- Commercial Vessel Codes
- Insurance

For further information: Tel: 01474 562503
Email: licensingenquiry@pla.co.uk
www.pla.co.uk

DISCHARGE OF SEWAGE INTO THE THAMES

The owner of a vessel licensed under section 124 of the Port of London Act or a houseboat must ensure that no sewage is discharged into the Thames. Please see Thames Byelaw 49.

Details of current sewage pump out facilities providing a service to recreational boaters are available on the Boating on the Thames website.

TOUR BRIDGE NAVIGATION

This diagram shows a bridge with various navigation lights and states: Isophase Light, Open to Navigation, Reduced Headroom, and Closed to Navigation. It explains that when the weirs are raised, the arches display signals for closed bridge arches.

THAMES BRIDGES - LIGHTS AND SHAPES

There is a long established custom and practice that bridge arches on the tidal Thames are numbered from north (Middlesex) shore. Using Westminster Bridge as an example, No. 1 arch lies on the north side close to the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Pier, and the No. 7 arch is on the south shore adjacent to St. Katharine's Hospital.

STAND-UP PADDLEBOARDING

Stand-Up Paddleboarding is currently not permitted to the West of Sea Reach 1 buoy, except where authorised by the Harbour Master (Thames Byelaw 13). Stand-Up Paddleboarding between the PLA's boundary side at Teddington and Putney Pier is permitted provided the stand up paddle boarding guide is followed. This guide can be found on the PLA's recreational website www.boatingonthames.co.uk in the paddling section.

Harbour Master's launch, call sign 'THAMES PATROL', will be controlling traffic in these situations. You must contact 'THAMES PATROL' on VHF Channel 14 if you wish to pass this area at these times.

Under normal conditions, navigation is through one span in each direction, indicated by green arrows on the Barrier's piers. London VTS will allocate a span to a vessel, indicated by the green arrows, when contacted on VHF Channel 14. Information regarding spans not available for navigation is broadcast at quarter past and quarter to each hour.

THAMES BARRIER

The Thames Barrier consists of ten spans lettered A to K from south to north:

- Spans B to G are open to navigation subject to restrictions summarised below.
- Spans C, D, E and F are 61m wide with a depth of 5.8m below Chart Datum.
- Spans B and G are 31.5m wide with a depth of 1.2m below Chart Datum and have depth boards on Piers 3 and 9.
- Spans A, H, J and K are permanently closed to navigation. Under normal circumstances, and subject to the requirements of partial closures, the northern spans E, F, and G are used for inward bound traffic and the southern spans B, C, and D are used for outward-bound traffic.

Spans Open to Navigation

Each navigational span of the Barrier has an array of traffic signals on the ends of the adjacent piers to indicate whether the spans are open or closed to navigation. The light signals are displayed both by day and by night. Spans are open only to traffic in a single direction at any one time.

Spans Permanently Closed to Navigation

Span A to the south and spans H, J and K to the north are permanently closed to navigation and display, at their centres, the signals prescribed in the Thames Byelaws for closed bridge arches (see the Thames Bridges – Lights and Shapes section).

Overtaking and Manoeuvring Restrictions

If your vessel needs to overtake or carry out manoeuvres in the Thames Barrier Control Zone, you must get clearance from London VTS before doing so.

Vessels Under Sail

If you are sailing between the Woolwich Ferry Terminal and Hookness, you must keep to the starboard side of the fairway and not impede any other vessels. Vessels fitted with a working engine should use motor power to navigate through the Thames Barrier.

Routine Barrier Closures

The Thames Barrier is subject to regular scheduled closure for maintenance and testing purposes. Details of these closures are contained in the relevant Notice to Mariners, which can be accessed via www.boatingonthames.co.uk.

Other Flood Barriers (Head clearances above Mean High Water Springs)

• Barking Creek - 33.5m	• Fobbing Creek - 9.3m
• Dartford Creek - 12.2m	• Benfleet Creek - 1.6m
• Easthaven Creek - 3.3m	

All Barriers show red flashing lights when closed.

River Thames Recreational Users Guide - NOT FOR NAVIGATION -

RECREATIONAL BOATERS

JOIN THE CLUB – IT'S FREE!

The PLA's 'Tidal Thames Navigators' Club gives all recreational boaters access to information better tailored to their navigation on the River. The club is free to join and its main aim is to further improve the communication with recreational boaters.

Members will receive:

- Regular up-dated river safety information tailored to their type of boating
- Tide Tables and Port Information Handbook
- The PLA Recreational Users Guide
- Mariners Guide to Bridges on the Tidal Thames and A2 Colour Folio Charts at a reduced price

As a boat owner it will give you the increased security of knowing that the Harbour Master can get in touch with you very easily should anything happen to your boat whilst you are ashore.

Join the PLA's dedicated recreational users' website: www.boatingonthames.co.uk

BE SEEN AND KEEP A GOOD LOOK OUT!

Small unpowered craft including rowing boats, kayaks, canoes and Stand-Up Paddleboards, can be difficult to see because of their size or visual obstructions (piers, bridges etc.). When you are on the tidal Thames it is important to keep a good look out at all times. For smaller unpowered craft it is just as important to be seen as it is to keep a good lookout. To ensure you are visible to others, you can:

- Put retro-reflective strips on clothing, buoyancy aids and the shaft of your paddle near the blade.
- Wear white LED lights either on your helmet or on your shoulder. Be sure, however, to avoid impairing your night vision.
- Wear neon coloured clothing in low visibility conditions.

As a minimum, your paddle powered vessel must have a torch or lighted lantern showing a white light to warn other river users of your presence.

THAMES MARINAS

Due to the tidal nature of the River Thames, the majority of marinas can only be accessed between 2 hours before and 2 hours after High Water at London Bridge. You should contact marinas direct to confirm appropriate lock in times.

1) Ahoy Centre Tel: 020 8691 7502 www.ahoy.org.uk	12) Limehouse Marina Tel: 020 7308 9930 www.bwml.co.uk/marinas
2) Brentford Dock Marina Tel: 07970 143987 www.brentfordcruisingclub.co.uk	13) London Corinthian Sailing Club Tel: 020 8748 3298 www.lcsc.org.uk
3) Chelsea Harbour Marina Tel: 07770 542783 www.chelseaharbourmarina.com/marina	14) Ranelagh Sailing Club Tel: 020 8788 4986 www.ranelagh-sc.co.uk
4) Chiswick Pier Tel: 0208 742 2713 www.chiswickpier.org.uk	15) Richmond Yacht Club Tel: 020 8952 2244 www.richmondyachtclub.co.uk
5) Chiswick Quay Marina Tel: 020 894 8743 www.chiswickquay.com/marina	16) South Bank Sailing Club Tel: 020 8788 9786 www.southbanksailingclub.co.uk
6) Erith Yacht Club Tel: 0845 0942148/68 www.erithyachtclub.org.uk	17) South Dock Marina Tel: 020 8952 2244 www.southdockmarina.com
7) Gallions Point Marina Ltd Tel: 020 7476 7054 www.gallionspointmarina.co.uk	18) St Katharine Haven Tel: 020 7684 5312 www.skdocks.co.uk
8) Greenwich Yacht Club Tel: 0844 7365846 www.greenwichyachtclub.co.uk	19) Twickenham Yacht Club Tel: 020 8922 9487 www.twickenhamyachtclub.co.uk
9) Hermitage Moorings Tel: 020 7481 2122 www.hcmoorings.org	20) West India Dock (Canals & River Trust) Tel: 020 7987 7260 www.canalrivertrust.org.uk
10) Hurlingham Yacht Club www.hurlinghamyachtclub.co.uk	21) Westminster Boating Base Tel: 020 7821 7389 www.westminsterboatingbase.co.uk
11) Imperial Wharf Marina Tel: 0207 384 3932 www.imperialwharfmarina.co.uk	