

TIDAL THAMES: RECREATIONAL USERS GUIDE

DON'T MIX BOOZE AND BOATS

BOAT SMART, BE SOBER

PAY ATTENTION WHEN NAVIGATING UNDER BRIDGES

REDUCED HEADROOM
1 WHITE LIGHT OR A BALE OF STRAW

CLOSED ARCH
3 RED LIGHTS NEVER USE A CLOSED ARCH

BUOYANCY AIDS AND LIFE JACKETS USELESS UNLESS WORN

ALWAYS USE A KILL CORD

STOP THE PROP

IN POOR VISIBILITY OR AT NIGHT YOU MUST SHOW CORRECT LIGHTS

STARBOARD (Green)

PORT (Red)

ALWAYS KEEP A GOOD LOOKOUT

NAVIGATE TO STARBOARD
THAT'S THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE IN THE DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

GIVE-WAY TO DEEPER VESSELS

LARGER VESSELS

LEFT-HAND PORT

RIGHT-HAND STARBOARD

WATCH OUT FOR WASH

LOWER THAMES AND ESTUARY NAVIGATION

Due to the large number of ships arriving and departing the Thames Estuary, recreational vessels should avoid using the Black Deep, Fisherman's Gat and Princes shipping channels. Instead, you should use:

- The Middle Deep, the Swin and Warp, or Barrow Deep and Warp when navigating to or from the North;
- The Horse and Gore and Four Fathom channels when navigating to or from the South; and
- Foulger's Gat in preference to Fisherman's Gat.

YANTLET CHANNEL NAVIGATION

The Yantlet Channel is marked by gated buoys to provide large vessels with a deep-water channel. You should keep your recreational vessel well clear of the Yantlet Channel and prior to using the crossing routes marked on this guide call 'London VTS' to inform them of your intentions, while adhering to the following procedure whenever possible:

- Inward from the North – Keep close to the starboard-hand buoys and beacons as you come up the river. At the West Leigh Middle Buoy, cross to the south side of the Yantlet Channel, having first made sure that the fairway is clear. Make for East Blyth Buoy before turning onto the inward track. There is safe water for small vessels to the south of the Mid Blyth, West Blyth, and Lower Hope Buoys. Remember outbound vessels will pass close to the port hand buoys as you continue on the south of the channel. When it is safe, cross back to the starboard side of the river in Lower Hope Reach as quickly as possible.
- Outward to the North – As above in reverse, but crossing to the north between Sea Reach No. 4 and 5 buoys.
- Inward from the South – Keep to the south of the Yantlet Channel well clear of the deepwater route, crossing to the north side in the Lower Hope as described above.

Recreational users are advised to maintain a listening watch on the appropriate London VTS sector VHF channel - VHF Ch 68 or Ch 69 (as appropriate).

WATERSPORTS

Personal Water Craft

Personal Water Craft (PWC) should only be used in authorised areas and are not permitted in a fairway or within 200 metres of any public beach, bathing place, residential property, wharf or jetty on the tidal Thames. For further information please refer to the Code of Conduct for use of Personal Water Craft on the Thames Estuary which is available to download from our website: <http://www.pla.co.uk/assets/thamespwccode.pdf>.

Water Skiing

The authorised areas for water-skiing are:

- Marsh End Sands – Launch at Two Tree Island Causeway
- Tewkes Creek – Launch at Two Tree Island Causeway
- Holehaven Creek – Launch at Pitsea Hall County Park

Water skiers must keep well clear of the Fobbing and Easthaven tidal barriers and their boat must manoeuvre at a slow speed appropriate to the local conditions when going to or from the authorised areas.

If you are in charge of a craft towing water skiers (or people involved in similar activities), you must ensure:

- A lifebuoy or other means of preserving life is on board;
- At least one other person is aboard and able to take charge of the vessel or to give assistance during the towing; and
- There are always two 'look-outs' on the towing boat, one to control and watch the boat and one to watch the participant.

Wind Surfing

The tidal Thames is extremely hazardous for wind surfers. You should therefore restrict this activity to the following areas:

- Westward of Putney Bridge; and
- Areas clear of the navigable channel and approaches to commercial berths in:

- Erith Sands
- Mucking Flats
- Blyth Sands/All Hallows
- Southend Pier to Canvey Island (Thorney Bay)

EMERGENCIES

You should always carry a mobile phone (in a water-proof case) for emergency use.

For life-threatening emergencies immediately call 999 or 112 and ask for the Coastguard.

They will send the appropriate assistance – be prepared to give your name, location, number of persons aboard and the nature of the emergency.

You can also broadcast a "MAYDAY" or "PAN-PAN" call on VHF Channel 16 or the London VTS channel for the area you are in; or calling London Coastguard or the Thames Barrier Navigation Centre (London VTS) directly.

INCIDENTS & NEAR MISSES

All river users should report any navigational incidents or Near Misses to London VTS, via the PLA App or Website - <http://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/SMS/Reporting-Navigational-Incidents-Safety-Concerns>

Port Control Centre, Gravesend

For incidents between the outer PLA limits at NE Spit and Sunk pilot stations and Crayfordness

Call sign: London VTS

VHF Channels: Outer Limits to SR No. 4 Buoy – Channel 69
SR No. 4 Buoy to Crayfordness – Channel 68
Telephone: Duty Port Controller 01474 560311 (24hrs)

Thames Barrier Navigation Centre, Woolwich

For incidents between Crayfordness and the landward PLA limit at Teddington

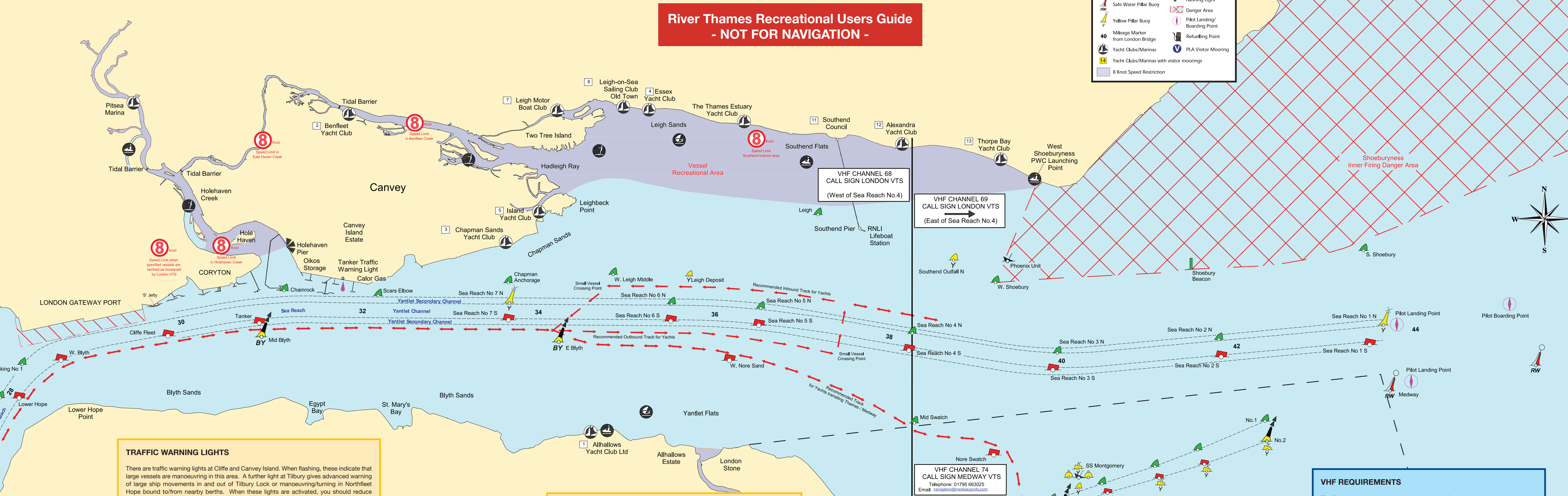
Call sign: London VTS

VHF Channels: Crayfordness to Teddington - Channel 14
Telephone: Duty Officer 0203 260 7711 (24hrs)

Key:

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Starboard Buoy | High Speed Craft |
| Port Buoy | Windsurfer |
| North Cardinal Buoy | Speed Limit |
| South Cardinal Buoy | Skipway/Causeway |
| Safe Water Pillar Buoy | Beacon |
| Yellow Pillar Buoy | Flashing Light |
| Mileage Marker from London Bridge | Danger Area |
| Yacht Clubs/Marinas | Pilot Landing/Boarding Point |
| Yacht Clubs/Marinas with visitor moorings | Refuelling Point |
| 8 Knot Speed Restriction | PLA Visitor Mooring |

River Thames Recreational Users Guide - NOT FOR NAVIGATION -



YACHT CLUB & MARINA INFORMATION

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Allhallows Yacht Club Ltd Tel: 01634 270788 www.allhallowsyachtclub.net | 6 Isle of Sheppey Sailing Club Tel: 01795 663052 www.iossc.org.uk | 11 Southend Council Tel: 01702 215620 www.southend.gov.uk | 16 Gravesend Sailing Club Tel: 07538 326623 (Clubhouse) Tel: 07506 367699 (Duty Officer) www.gravesendsailingclub.co.uk |
| 2 Benfleet Yacht Club Tel: 01268 792278 www.benfleetyachtclub.org | 7 Leigh Motor Boat Club Tel: 01702 714858 www.leighmotorboatclub.com | 12 Alexandra Yacht Club contact@alexayachtclub.co.uk www.alexayachtclub.co.uk | 17 Gravesend Town Pier & Mooring Buoys Tel: 01474 337600 www.gogravesham.uk/see-and-do/gravesend_pontoon.aspx |
| 3 Chapman Sands Yacht Club Tel: 01268 682643 www.chapmansands.gosold.info | 8 Leigh-on-Sea Sailing Club Tel: 01702 476788 www.leighsailingclub.org | 13 Thorpe Bay Yacht Club Tel: 01702 587563 www.tbyc.org | |
| 4 Essex Yacht Club Tel: 01702 478404 www.essexyachtclub.co.uk | 9 Queenborough Harbour Trust Tel: 01795 662051 www.queenborough-harbour.co.uk | 14 Thurrock Yacht Club Tel: 01375 373720 www.thurrockyachtclub.org | |
| 5 Island Yacht Club Tel: 01268 510360 www.islandyachtclub.org.uk | 10 Queenborough Yacht Club Tel: 01795 663955 www.queenboroughyachtclub.co.uk | 15 Gravesend Embankment Marina Tel: 01474 535700 www.theembankmentmarina.net | |

TRAFFIC WARNING LIGHTS

There are traffic warning lights at Cliffe and Canvey Island. When flashing, these indicate that large vessels are manoeuvring in this area. A further light at Tilbury gives advanced warning of large ship movements in and out of Tilbury Lock or manoeuvring/turning in Northfleet Hope bound to/from nearby berths. When these lights are activated, you should reduce speed if necessary and keep clear of large manoeuvring vessels.

LOWER THAMES NAVIGATION

A small craft cannot always be seen from a ship's bridge, this 'blind arc' can be up to one mile ahead and half a mile on either side of the bow. If you cannot see the bridge, the bridge cannot see you and the ships will not be able to take avoiding action.

Due to their size, ships in narrow channels may not have room to take avoiding action. You should not underestimate the speed of ships and, if near large vessels, you should ensure that you stay well clear and take effective evasive action, ensuring you obey the COLREGS.

Large vessels have little room to manoeuvre in narrow channels.

Queenborough Harbour welcomes you Visitor Moorings

- 24 hour access to deep water moorings
- Vessels up to 30m (100ft)
- River Taxi every weekend and every day in high season
- Local refreshments and services in a rural setting
- Friendly helpful staff

01795 662051 VHF CH 08

www.queenborough-harbour.co.uk

THAMES MARINE SERVICES

FUELLING THE THAMES

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- Electrics
- Gear box & propulsion maintenance
- Plumbing
- Refrigeration
- Hydraulics

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www.thamesmarineservices.co.uk

VHF REQUIREMENTS

The Port of London Authority strongly advise all recreational river users to carry and use a VHF radio and maintain a continuous listening watch to London VTS at all times. If your vessel is over 13.7m (45ft) you must carry a VHF radio capable of communicating with London VTS. Special arrangements are in place to exempt Narrow Boats which transit only between the Grand Union Canal and the non-tidal Thames via the Brentford and Teddington Locks, from carrying a VHF Radio. If you intend on exercising this exemption, you must telephone London VTS (Thames Barrier Navigation Centre) to report immediately before, and again on completion, of your transit of the tidal Thames. In addition to carrying a VHF, vessels over 40m in length or 50 gross tons must report their arrival, departure and passage through the port at the designated reporting points (these are marked on Thames charts).

LONDON VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICES

The PLA VTS centres at Gravesend and Woolwich monitor vessel traffic movements on the Thames. They operate 24 hours a day and broadcast navigational information and advice every half-hour. Be aware that VHF radio conversations, telephone calls, CCTV and radar images are recorded in both VTS centres. London VTS VHF channels are as follows:

- Channel 69 (from the seaward limit to Sea Reach No. 4 Buoy) - Navigational broadcasts are made at 15 minutes and 45 minutes past each hour.
- Channel 68 (from Sea Reach No 4 Buoy to Crayfordness) - Navigational broadcasts are made on the hour and at 30 minutes past each hour.
- Channel 14 (from Crayfordness to Teddington) - Navigational broadcasts are made at 15 minutes and 45 minutes past each hour.

