PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY

PORT INFORMATION GUIDE

Port of London Authority

Port Information Guide

NOTE

THIS IS A LIVE DOCUMENT, AND WILL BE UPDATED WHEN REQUIRED.
PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE LATEST VERSION.

Last Updated:
11 January 2024

INTRODUCTION

This guide has been produced for all river users, vessel owners and operators, publishers of nautical information and any other party that needs nautical information.

The Port of London Authority (PLA) makes every effort to make and maintain the contents of this document as up-to-date, accessible, error-free and complete as possible; however, the correctness and completeness of these contents cannot be guaranteed. The PLA accepts no liability for the occurrences and/or consequences of errors, faults or incompleteness, or any other omission in connection with the information provided by this document. In case of any discrepancies or inconsistencies between this document and the applicable legislation, including port regulations, the latter will prevail. Any substantive change to port regulations, practices or procedures would be reflected in amendments to this guide as soon as practicable. The Port of London Authority cannot guarantee the security of any external links used in this document. Any external links used will be marked with an asterisk.

The Port of London Authority (PLA) was established in 1909 as per the Port of London Act of 1968 (as amended). The latest revision of the Act was completed in January 2014 and can be found on our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Port-of-London-Act-1968

For Rules, guidelines and best practice for navigation on the tidal River Thames, visit our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/

CONTACT US

For General Enquiries contact the Port of London Authority using the details below:

London River House
Royal Pier Road
Gravesend
Kent
DA12 2BG
United Kingdom

General Enquiries: (+44) (0) 1474 562200

https://www.pla.co.uk/Contact-Us

For Safety of Navigation, Incident/Near Miss Reporting and Emergencies, contact London VTS, which is the primary point of contact for the PLA.

For matters **between the Outer Limits and Crayfordness:**
London VTS – Port Control Centre, Gravesend
(+44) (0)1474 560 311 (Routine Calls) **Office Hours**
(+44) (0) 1474 562 215 (Emergency Only) **24 Hrs**

Outer Limits to Sea Reach No. 4 use VHF Ch. 69
Sea Reach No. 4 to Crayfordness use VHF Ch. 68

For matters **between Crayfordness and Teddington Lock:**
London VTS – Thames Barrier Navigation Centre, Woolwich

(+44) (0) 203 260 7711 **24 Hrs**
VHF Ch. 14

For more information, see 'London VTS' in the Port Information A-Z

PLEASE REPORT A NEAR MISS

By PHONE

(+44) (0) 203 260 7711
above Crayfordness

(+44) (0) 1474 562 215
below Crayfordness

over VHF

channel 14
Teddington – Crayfordness
channel 68
Crayfordness – Sea Reach 4
channel 69
Sea Reach 4 – Outer Limits

on the PLA APP

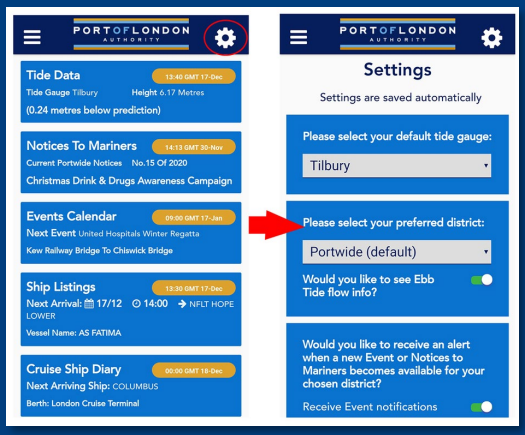
Scroll down on a smart phone to
Report Near Miss / Incident

You can also report directly via our website: click here

Our Free App makes planning trips on the Thames easier!

Download the app to get essential data including:

- Live tidal data from 12 locations along the 95 mile tidal river Thames
- Alert for Notices to Mariners, which detail the latest information on events, river and engineering works and recent changes that users need to be aware of before setting off.
- Events calendar, covering planned rowing, sailing, and paddling activities.
- Details of all the mooring locations along the river, including amenities at each location like mains electric, fuel, and pump-out facilities.



Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

Get the app now for *iOS and *Android.
Or simply search for: 'PLA Tidal Thames App'.

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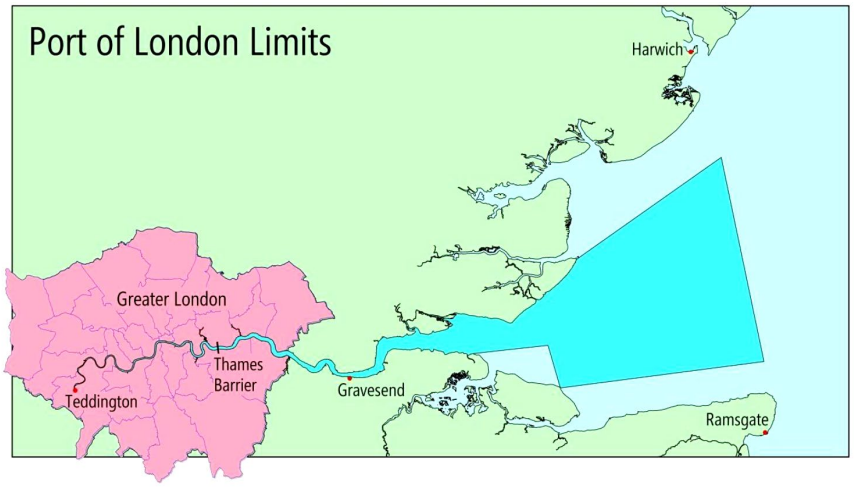
STATUTORY LIMITS FOR THE PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY

The Port of London spans the entirety of the Tidal River Thames, from the Teddington Obelisk on the Surrey bank just downriver from Teddington Lock, to the North Sea as pictured below. This is described as in Schedule 1 of the Port of London Act 1968 (as amended) but in general terms include the tidal Thames from Teddington, encompassing both banks up to mean high water, eastward to Foulness Point in the north and Warden Point in the south. In the estuary the limits extend from Foulness point to Gunfleet Old Lighthouse, thence to a position 3 miles north of Margate, and back to Warden Point. The port limits exclude the River Medway and certain other creeks and rivers.



Visual depiction of Port of London Limits

For queries about this guide, please contact our Harbour Master Team:

Email: harbourmaster@pla.co.uk

Telephone: (+44) (0) 1474 562200

London River House
Royal Pier Road
Gravesend
Kent
DA12 2BG
United Kingdom

www.pla.co.uk

PORT INFORMATION A – Z

ANCHORING

1. There are multiple designated anchorages in the Port of London, for a full list of anchorages, refer to pages 23 – 27 of the PLA Tide Tables and Port Information, available at: https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/platidetable2023webversion.pdf

2. For rules on Anchoring in the Port of London, refer to our General Directions for Navigation in the Port of London: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/PLA-General-Directions

BALLAST OPERATIONS

1. Any vessels wishing to undertake ballast operations should adhere to UK and International Regulations, plus any restrictions/requirements of the berth owner/operator. The UK regulations regarding ballast water operations is available at: *https://www.gov.uk/guidance/control-and-management-of-ballast-water

BERTHS

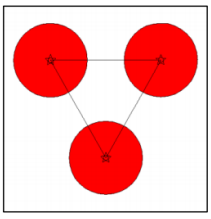
1. For recreational berths, visitor moorings and marinas, visit our website to see our interactive map: https://boatingonthethames.co.uk/

2. For a list of all commercial berths and terminals on the tidal Thames visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Port-Trade/Interactive-Terminal-Map

BRIDGES

1. For a full list of Clearance Heights for Bridges crossing the river and the various creeks along the tidal Thames, visit https://pla.co.uk/Safety/Thames-Bridges-Heights

2. **ARCHES CLOSED TO NAVIGATION**



Arches on Thames bridges may be closed for various reasons from time to time. **As per the PLA General Directions (General Direction 17.1 (d)), No vessel is to transit through a bridge arch which is closed to Navigation.** Arches closed to navigation will be marked in accordance with the Thames Byelaws 2012:

a) by day, three red discs 0.6 metres in diameter at the points of an equilateral triangle with the apex downwards and the base horizontal;
b) by night, three red lights in similar positions to the discs displayed by day.

2.1. Arches closed/open/open to specific vessels may also be marked by the use of smart signals, as detailed below:

Open to navigation to all vessels subject to limitations of draft and air draft.

Closed to navigation to all vessels.

Only "PERMITTED VESSELS" may transit through the arch.

3. BRIDGE TRANSITS WITH SPECIAL PROCEDURES

As per the PLA General Directions (General Direction 28), vessels wishing to transit the following bridges must follow the procedures as described below:

3.1. TOWER BRIDGE

Vessels with an air draft of 9 metres or more wishing to transit Tower Bridge must request a bridge lift at least 24 hours in advance, as described on the following website: *https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/lift-times/book-a-bridge-lift. Vessels intending to transit Tower Bridge which have arranged for the bascules of the bridge to be raised must:

a) at Crayfordness inward-bound, or when departing a berth west of Crayfordness, notify London VTS of:
   i) a confirmed ETA for Tower Bridge; and
   ii) the place at which the Vessel can safely abort;
b) establish communications with Tower Bridge control 30 minutes before their ETA for Tower Bridge;
c) not transit beyond their declared abort point until confirmation has been received from Tower Bridge Control that the bridge bascules will be raised in good time.

3.2. DEPTFORD CREEK BRIDGES

Vessels wishing to transit the Deptford Creek bridges must contact: Malcolm.Smith@royalgreenwich.gov.uk or Martin.Scotter@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

3.3. BOW CREEK – LEAMOUTH/CANNING TOWN FOOTBRIDGE

Vessels with an air draft of greater than 4.9m will advise London VTS on VHF Channel 14 or by telephone: (+44) (0) 203 260 7711 of a requirement for the bridge to be raised, giving an estimated time of arrival (ETA) at the bridge with a minimum notice period of 60 minutes whereby it will be ensured that no alarms are activated regarding operation of the bridge. If there are any issues likely to impact on the bridge operation these are to be informed to London VTS at this stage and confirmed as resolved at the 15 min confirmation communication exchange. 15 minutes before arrival at the bridge the vessel will confirm its ETA to London VTS.

3.4. **HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE**

As part of the ongoing stabilisation and repair works at Hammersmith bridge, control lights have been installed either side of the bridge. The bridge control lights will display one of two signals: a green arrow or a red cross. *(see 2.1 under the Bridges section for the meaning of these signals).*

3.4.1. In the event of a bridge closure, an exclusion zone of 15 metres upriver and downriver of the bridge will be implemented. Mariners are advised that there is no set time duration of a closure as engineers investigate the cause of the alarm. All mariners are advised to have an abort and contingency plan available for a closure which may last longer than the tidal window available.

BUNKERING OPERATIONS

1. As per the PLA General Directions (General Direction 9), a Bunker Vessel, or any Vessel receiving bunkers pumped from a shore side facility or road tanker, must notify London VTS of the type of bunkers being transferred, and report to London VTS immediately before, and on completion of, Bunkering. Masters of vessels are reminded that bunkering operations within the Port of London are also subject to the following conditions:

1.1. **NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING**

The Master of a vessel of more than 50gt (other than one which normally navigates solely within the limits of the Port of London) intending to receive bunkers, shall give notification in writing or by VHF radio to London VTS not less than 2 hours in advance of the intention to bunker. The notification should state:

a) the location the bunkering will take place;
b) the type of bunker oil to be transhipped; and
c) the expected time that bunkering will commence.

Additionally, Masters of all such vessels shall also report by VHF to London VTS immediately before bunkering is about to commence, and on completion of bunkering.

1.2. **CHECKLISTS**

The Masters of all vessels of more than 50gt intending to receive bunkers, shall complete a bunker checklist in conjunction with the supplying party, with all questions answered accurately.

1.3. **PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY ALL RECEIVING VESSELS**

The Master of all vessels receiving bunkers shall ensure that:

a) scuppers are firmly closed;
b) vessel is securely moored or safely at anchor;
c) any special instructions issued by the Harbour Master have been complied with;
d) bunker pipes which are not in use are effectively blanked;
e) bunker hoses have sufficient play and are adequately supported;
f) bunker hose connections have been provided with a good seal;
g) there is a well-tightened bolt in every bolt hole in the bunker hose connection flanges;
h) there is a sufficiently large overflow container under the bunker hose connection(s);
i) cargo-handling or other operations in progress will not hazard the bunker operations or vice-versa; and
j) there is an agreed communication system established between the vessel receiving bunkers and bunkering barge.

1.4. **PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY, SUPPLYING VESSEL, ROAD TANKER OR TERMINAL**

The Master of a bunker barge, the driver of a road tanker or a terminal providing bunkers, is not to begin bunkering unless it has been ensured that:

a) scuppers are firmly closed;
b) the bunkering vessel is securely moored;
c) any special instructions issued by the Harbour Master have been complied with;
d) the bunker hoses are properly maintained and in good condition.

1.5. **BUNKER VESSELS**

Vessels which are both Intra-port Vessels and Bunker Vessels must notify London VTS of the type and amount of bunker cargo they are carrying aboard prior to every instance of getting Underway.

1.6. **REPORTING OF OIL SPILLS**

The master of any Vessel involved in an oil spill must immediately report to London VTS. Information to be reported includes reporting location, type of oil, approximate quantity, and action taken to limit and control the spill.

1.7. **BUNKERING OPERATIONS AT ANCHORAGES INCLUDING TONGUE ANCHORAGE**

Bunkering at Anchorages, including those outside Port Limits but within the London VTS Area (Tongue Anchorage), may only be conducted by vessels/companies which have been approved by the Harbourmaster. Other organisations wishing to carry out bunkering operations outside of port limits but within the VTS Area should contact the Harbourmaster (harbourmaster@pla.co.uk). Bunkering in the Margate Road anchorage is not permitted.

1.8 All vessels intending to enter the London VTS area, which are to be involved in ship-to-ship bunkering operations, shall provide standard pre-arrival and departure notifications via the PISCES system. Vessels carrying dangerous or polluting goods are required to declare them in advance of their arrival and departure.

1.9 In addition to the standard VTS reporting requirements, not less than 2 hours before bunkering commences, vessels intending to receive bunkers in Anchorages must notify London VTS of their intention to bunker and provide the following information in that notification:

a) The location the bunkering will take place;
b) The type and quantity of bunkers to be received; and
c) The expected time that bunkering will commence.

1.10 Vessels must report to London VTS before the commencement of bunkering operations and give positive confirmation to VTS that their bunker checklists have been completed. Vessels must not commence bunkering operations without the permission of London VTS. Vessels must report to London VTS on completion of bunkering operations detailing the exact type and quantity of bunkers.

1.11 **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Bunkering operations must not commence or must be suspended if the local weather conditions exceed Beaufort Force 6, sea / swell heights in excess of 2m, and constant winds exceeding 27 knots. However, London VTS or the Master of the bunkering vessel may direct, that bunkering operations be suspended in less adverse conditions if deemed necessary. All vessels anchored for the purpose of bunkering are required to have their main engines available at immediate notice. In addition, they are required to exhibit code flag 'Bravo' by day and an all-round red light by night. Whilst bunkering operations are in progress a 100m domain intrusion zone will be established around the vessel, which will be monitored by London VTS and by the vessel taking bunkers.

1.12 For a list of bunker suppliers operating in the Port of London visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=100

CALCULATING VESSEL DRAFTS

1. The water density of the Thames varies between berths and throughout the river. Density measurements also vary at different times of the day and year, and are significantly affected by local variations in salinity, temperature and by the weather.

2. It is the Master's responsibility to ensure they are aware of these variations and to submit their vessel's actual deepest draft, taking into account water density.

3. When calculating drafts or freshwater allowance, it is recommended that density measurements are taken at the time at relevant locations, such as the vessel's berth/anchorage.

4. Information regarding observed water density readings is available at: https://www.pla.co.uk/Hydrography/River-Density-Readings.

5. *See also, WATER DENSITY.*

CARGO OPERATIONS

1. For a full list of Cargo Handlers operating within the Port of London, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=28

CHARGES

1. For a full list of the published rates and charges for services provided by the PLA, including Terms and Conditions for services provided, visit https://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/PLA-Charges.

CHARTS AND PUBLICATIONS

1. The Tidal Thames is covered across various publications including Admiralty Sailing Directions and Admiralty Charts, as well as our own Charts developed by our Hydrographic department. Visit https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Hydrography to view our Hydrographic information. Our Hydrographic products are available for purchase from the PLA Shop: https://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/Shop

2. To acquire Admiralty Charts and other Publications covering the Thames produced by the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office, visit: *https://www.admiralty.co.uk/

3. Mariners should ensure Nautical Publications are always kept up-to-date, as well as ensuring they always carry the latest and most appropriate scale chart for the area in which they are navigating. To access all Port of London Chart Correction Advices (CCAs) visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/PLA-Hydrographic-Service-Published-Surveys and for Admiralty Notices to Mariners (NMs) see: *https://www.admiralty.co.uk/maritime-safety-information/admiralty-notices-to-mariners

4. For any queries, please contact PLA Hydrographic Service at: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Hydrography or call +44 (0)1474 562207

5. Charts freely are available to download in pdf format from our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/PLA-Hydrographic-Service-Published-Surveys

CIVIL ENGINEERING

1. For a full list of Civil Engineering providers visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=33

CRAFT TOWAGE

1. For a full list of operators providing craft towage visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=80

2. The Port of London Authority have published a Code of Practice on Craft Towage Operations, visit our website to read the full code: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/Code-of-Practice-for-Craft-Towage-Operations-on-the-Thames

3. For Ship Harbour Towage, please see 'Ship Towage'.

CRITICAL DEPTHS

1. Up to date information regarding critical depths along the tidal Thames is available here: https://www.pla.co.uk/hydrographics/data/navinfo/critlist.pdf.

CRUISE AND SUPERYACHT MOORINGS

1. There are various moorings for cruise ships and superyachts along the tidal Thames as detailed below:
    a) London Cruise Terminal (Tilbury)
    b) Greenwich Ship Tier (Vessels up to 228m length)
    c) George's Stairs Tier – downriver of Tower Bridge (Vessels up to 110m length)
    d) Tower Bridge Upper – upriver of Tower Bridge (Vessels up to 158m length)

2. In addition, cruise ships and superyachts can also berth at West India Docks and in the Royal Docks. For full details including contact information and how to book, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Port-Trade/Cruise-Terminals. For further details on the PLA's Central London Cruise Ship and Super Yacht Moorings including how to book, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Port-Trade/Central-London-Cruise-Moorings

DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES IN BULK

1. For rules and regulations covering the transport of dangerous substances in bulk within the Port of London, visit our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/

DIVING

1. The Port of London Authority employs commercially qualified divers who are in demand for many different tasks. For more information visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/Diving-and-Salvage

2. **PERMISSION TO DIVE**

   As per the Thames Byelaws (Byelaw 20), diving contractors must not undertake any diving activity in the Thames, without first obtaining the permission of the harbour master. Any person intending to undertake any diving activity in the Thames must inform the harbourmaster, through the appropriate VTS Centre, prior to the commencement, and on the completion, of any diving activity. Details on how to obtain a diving permit are available on our website:
   https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Diving-Permit-to-Work/Commercial-Diving

3. **VESSELS INVOLVED IN DIVING OPERATIONS**

   As per the Thames Byelaws (Byelaw 33), in addition to the signals required by Rule 27(d) or (e) of the International Collision Regulations, a vessel supporting any diving activity permitted by the harbourmaster under byelaw 20 must:

   a) by night, exhibit conspicuously an illuminated rigid replica of the International Code Flag "A' not less than 1 metre in height; and
   b) by day, exhibit conspicuously a red flag not less than 1 metre square in a position as close as possible to the diver's point of entry into the water.

DREDGING

1. A dredging licence is required for any works involving dredging. Dredging is defined as including any operation to cleanse, scour, cut, deepen, widen, dredge or take up or remove material from the bed and banks of the Thames. Bed levelling, ploughing and hydrodynamic dredging fall within this definition.

2. For information on how to obtain a dredging licence visit our website:
   https://www.pla.co.uk/Licensing/Dredging

3. For a full list of Dredging Services offered within the Port of London, visit:
   https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=39

DRONES/UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES (UAV)

1. The Port of London Authority have the responsibility to ensure safety to all of those using the River Thames and as such need to be notified about any intended UAV flight over the river. For more information about the use of Drones/Unmanned Aerial Vehicles on the tidal Thames, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Use-of-drones/unmanned-aerial-vehicles-UAVs.

DRYING OUT FACILITIES

1. The PLA has two drying out facilities in the upper district; Strand-on-the-Green Grid and Isleworth Drawdock.

2. Isleworth Drawdock is a stretch of vertical river wall with regularly spaced piles and a riverbed suitable for taking the ground (for appropriate vessels), that is directly accessible by road. Isleworth is practically unlimited in the size of vessel it can accommodate.

3. Strand-on-the-Green grid is a timber grid suitable for smaller vessels, but without road access. The grid is limited to flat bottomed vessels of 25m length, 9m beam and a displacement of 200 tons. There is a tide board on the upriver pile of the grid, and it should be noted that there is no direct shore access at this facility.

4. For more information including charges for using our Drying Out Facilities, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/PLA-Drying-Out-Facilities.

ECOLOGY

1. The tidal Thames and Estuary is an area recognised for its Environmental importance. It is home to thousands of over wintering birds, 125 different species of fish, 4 special protection areas and 10 sites of special scientific interest (SSSI). The Thames is also home to a number of marine mammals, including harbour seals, grey seals and harbour porpoises. These species can be found throughout the region, including in Central London.

2. For guidance on the local ecology of the tidal Thames, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/a1ecologymapupdate.pdf

3. For guidance on Invasive species non-native to the Thames visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Guidance-on-Invasive-Non-Native-Species

4. For guidance on Marine Mammals on the Thames and how to report sightings, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Marine-Mammals-in-the-Thames

5. If you spot what you think is a stranded seal or another marine mammal on the banks of the Thames, please report it to the London VTS using the details in the Contact Us section.

EMERGENCY MOORINGS

1. Vessels requiring the use of an emergency mooring should contact London VTS using the relevant VHF channel or telephone number for the area they are in.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

1. The Port of London Authority is a Category 2 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. In addition to supporting Category 1 responders, we will co-operate with other organisations in the planning, response and recovery for emergencies and support initiatives with implications for the tidal River Thames. For more information about our Emergency Planning function, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Emergency-Planning/.
2. For routine Emergency Planning, Contingency Management and Resilience Issues, please contact the PLA by phone: +44 (0)1474562200 or email us at emergencyplanning@pla.co.uk.

EMISSIONS REDUCTION

1. Air quality and emissions to air from vessels is a health and environmental priority in the UK and has been identified as being one of the top issues for ports in Europe. The operation of vessels on the tidal Thames provides only a small percentage of the London atmospheric emission inventory, accounting for 1% of the capital's emissions. However, the river's overall contribution to London's emissions is likely to increase as emissions from road vehicles fall due to tightening legislation, and use of the river grows. The aim of the Air Quality Strategy for the tidal Thames has set out emission reduction targets, focusing on nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and carbon dioxide, to 2051.

2. To read about our Air Quality Strategy for the tidal Thames, visit our website: http://www.pla.co.uk/environment/Air-Quality-and-Green-Tariff/Air-Quality

3. To view our roadmap to reducing emissions in the Thames and what you can do to contribute, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Air-Quality-and-Green-Tariff/Emissions-reduction-roadmap-usable-assets

ENVIRONMENT

1. The Port of London Authority is a harbour authority, a licensing authority and a landowner. This means we have certain commitments to provide environmental stewardship and champion environmental best practice. In our own Act we are required to maintain and improve the conservancy of the river and estuary.

2. Find out about our work looking after the environment of the tidal Thames, including habitat management, driftwood collection, Thames Barrier navigation and more by visiting: https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/. You can also contact our Environment team at environment@pla.co.uk or by phone: (+44) (0)1474 562200.

3. For a list of Frequently Asked Questions, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Environment-FAQs

EVENTS

1. The Thames is home to globally renowned events like the University Boat Race, traditional barge and cutter races and the river marathon, the Great River Race. To find out more about past and future events visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Events or to view our Events calendar, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Events/Annual-Events-Calendar

2. For event organiser guidance visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Event-Organiser-Guidance
3. As per the Thames Byelaws (Byelaw 9), A person must not organise or promote a boat race, regatta, stunt, procession, exhibition, firework display, air race or other river event on or over the Thames except with the consent of the harbourmaster.

EXCLUSION ZONES

1. As per the PLA General Directions (General Direction 17), no vessel is to enter any Exclusion Zone shown on PLA charts or established in the Thames from time to time by the PLA. **Vessels must also not approach within 60 metres of any Berthed tanker, or oil or gas jetty in the Thames**. Exclusion Zones in place on the Thames are described below:

1.1. **LAMBETH REACH**

No person or vessel, shall, except in an emergency, or with the written permission of the Harbourmaster, enter into an area within 70 metres of the northern bank of the River Thames between Westminster Bridge and 200 metres below Lambeth Bridge, except as provided below. This area is marked by yellow buoys and is shown on charts. This restriction shall not apply to licensed passenger vessels approaching or departing from Westminster Pier. However, these vessels shall avoid entering into the area described as far as safe navigation permits and at no time may they approach closer than 15 metres to the northern river bank.

1.2. **ALBERT EMBANKMENT**

An Exclusion Zone is established in the vicinity of Albert Embankment. The Zone extends from the upstream side of Vauxhall Bridge to the lower side of Lacks Dock extending from the embankment for a distance of 15 metres into the river. No vessel shall, except in an emergency or with the written permission of a Harbourmaster, navigate within or enter the Exclusion Zone.

1.3. **RICHMOND LOCK & WEIR**

Mariners should not enter the Richmond Lock, Weir and Footbridge Exclusion Zone whilst the weirs are in the lowered position or when they are being operated. Only when the weir gates are fully raised, and the Closed Arch Signs have been removed is it permitted to navigate into the navigation exclusion zone and through Richmond Footbridge No. 2 or No. 3 arches. Only those vessels manoeuvring on or to the Lock island berths, vessels

engaged in emergency operations or smaller vessels wishing to utilise the boat rollers in No. 1 arch are exempt from this requirement.

1.4. **Additional Exclusion Zones may be implemented from time to time, and Mariners will be notified by a Notice to Mariners or by London VTS.**

EXHAUST GAS CLEANING SYSTEMS (SCRUBBERS)

1. In 2010 regulations within the Directive 2005/33/EC came into force in the UK requiring 0.1% sulphur content fuel to be burnt within port limits. Since 2012, International conventions has also required that fuel used within the North Sea Sulphur Emission Control Area (SECA) must have a maximum sulphur content of 0.1% (1000ppm) on a mass basis, or vessels use a technology that can reduce sulphur emissions to an equivalent level.

2. Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems (EGCS), in combination with the use of heavy fuel oil (HFO), are accepted as a suitable technology to reaching the sulphur cap, providing specific criteria is met. In 2019, the PLA undertook a study to evaluate the use of EGCS, on the tidal River Thames. The study was taken place to address the concerns of the potential impacts of the wash water from open loop scrubbers on water and sediment quality in ports and the marine environment.

3. The MCA currently place no restrictions on the use of exhaust gas cleaning systems in ports, providing the systems meet the criteria set out in MSN 1819, except where local port authorities see fit to place them. MSN 1819 provides an overview from the MCA. Read more on the UK Government website:
*https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/939681/MSN_1819_Amendment.pdf

4. Following the review, the PLA will continue to allow the use of both open and closed loop scrubbers in the tidal Thames until further evidence is presented. However, open loop scrubbers are not permitted at any berths operated by the Port of Tilbury. Other individual berth operators may have their own restrictions on the use of scrubbers, agents/owners are therefore, advised to contact any berth operators directly for advice.

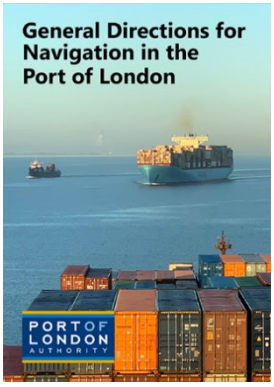
FILMING

1. All filming activity (and all commercial still photography) on the tidal Thames requires a filming licence. This includes ALL filming involving boats and vessels and filming on piers and other structures in the River. We can also advise on the possibilities for safe filming activity on the Thames foreshore (i.e. the part of the river exposed at low tide). For more information visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Media-Centre/Filming-and-Promotions-on-the-Thames

FORESHORE PERMITS

1. Anyone searching the tidal Thames foreshore from Teddington to the Thames Barrier - in any way for any reason - must hold a current foreshore permit from the Port of London Authority. This includes all searching, metal detecting, 'beachcombing', scraping and digging. For more information about Thames Foreshore Permits including how to apply for a permit, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Thames-foreshore-permits

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR NAVIGATION



1. In order to maintain and enhance safety of Navigation on the Thames, it is important that Masters and watchkeepers are familiar with current Thames Byelaws, General Directions and Notices to Mariners. It is therefore vital that owners/agents ensure that all such publications and relevant information are promptly distributed to Vessels as appropriate.

2. It is the duty of the Master of a Vessel to which a General Direction applies to comply with that General Direction. However, the giving of a General Direction does not diminish or in any other way affect, the responsibility of the Master in relation to his Vessel, Persons on board, its cargo or any other Person or property (Section 116 of the Act).

3. Failure by the Master of a Vessel to comply with a General Direction constitutes an offence, and renders that Person liable, on conviction, to a fine up to level 5 on the standard scale.

4. However, it is a defence for the Master of a Vessel to prove that he had reasonable grounds for supposing that compliance with the General Direction in question would be likely to imperil his Vessel or that in the circumstances, compliance was impracticable (Section 117 of the Act).

5. The PLA General Directions are available to download from our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/PLA-General-Directions

GREEN TARIFF

1. Vessels visiting the Port of London that can show that they go beyond basic environmental requirements are eligible for a discount on port charges. The discount is automatically applied to vessels registered under the Environmental Ships Index (ESI) scheme with a score of 30, or above.

2. For the details of the discount and eligibility, visit https://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/PLA-Charges.

3. For more information about the ESI scheme, visit: *https://www.environmentalshipindex.org/

HOUSEBOATS

1. Living afloat in a houseboat on the tidal Thames can be a great lifestyle, but requires careful consideration, especially for individuals new to the river. For more information visit: https://www.boatingonthethames.co.uk/houseboats-living-afloat-tidal-thames-boating-on-the-thames-port-of-london-authority/

HYDROGRAPHY

1. The Port of London Authority (PLA) has the busiest port hydrographic department in the UK with nine surveyors and support staff comprising 18 employees in total. The department also has 3 dedicated survey craft fitted with multibeam echo sounder systems (MBES).

2. For more information about our Hydrographic department including a full range of services available, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Hydrography.

IMMOBILISATION

1. It remains for the Master to decide it is safe to immobilise the vessel, taking account the berth or anchorage, and all parameters of wind and tide both existing and forecast for the period of immobilisation. The Master should adhere to any restrictions/instructions from the berth owner/operator.

2. Please inform London VTS 30 minutes prior to, and on completion of immobilisation, on the appropriate VHF channel so that an overview of the situation within port limits is maintained.

INTRA-PORT VESSEL REGISTRATION

1. General Direction 32 of 2021 introduced new requirements for all commercial intra-port vessels on the tidal Thames to be registered with the Port of London Authority (PLA), regardless of any other registration, licence or certificate held.

2. A dedicated portal is available to allow owners and operators to register their vessels: https://ipvr.pla.co.uk/home

3. For more information, including a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/Intra-Port-Vessel-Registration

LARGE VESSEL TRANSITS WEST OF MARGARETNESS

1. GALLIONS REACH – LONDON CITY AIRPORT

Large vessels with an air draft greater than 45 metres, intending to transit Gallions Reach in the vicinity of London City Airport, must refer to the PLA General Directions – General Direction 28 for procedures to follow: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/PLA-General-Directions.

2. LONDON CABLE CAR

Vessels with a length overall greater than 130 metres and/or an air draft greater than 55.1 metres, intending to transit the London Cable Car, must refer to the PLA General Directions – General Direction 28 for procedures to follow: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/PLA-General-Directions.

LONDON GATEWAY PORT

1. DP World London Gateway Port is an independent Statutory Harbour Authority, sited within the boundaries of the PLA, is the UK's most integrated logistics hub featuring a state-of-the-art deep-sea port and rail terminal on the same site as an expansive land bank for the flexible and fast development of logistics facilities and warehouses. Vessels arriving at London Gateway Port are advised that London Gateway Port have their own Vessel Information Guide which is available to download from their website: *https://www.dpworld.com/london-gateway/-/media/project/dpwg/dpwg-tenant/europe/london-gateway/media-files/port-services-info/vessel-information-guide-september-2020-aw-final.pdf

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE ENDORSEMENT (LKE)

1. In July 2012 the PLA's Thames Byelaws 2012 were implemented, which require the master of any commercial vessel between 40m and 13.7m length overall and those vessels under 13.7m length overall, which are engaged in passenger carriage or towing to hold an LKE for the tidal Thames. This also applies to MCA Boatmaster Licence holders.

2. More information about Local Knowledge Endorsements (LKEs) is available at: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/The-Harbour-Masters/PLA-Local-Knowledge-Endorsement.

LOCAL TRAFFIC CONTROL

1. Local Traffic Control is typically conducted from a PLA Harbour Service Launch under the following circumstances:
    a) Arrival and Departure of Large Vessels at certain locations such as Tower Bridge Upper and Greenwich Ship Tier
    b) Major events and filming operations
    c) Bridge Arch Closures
    d) Emergency Situations

2. The implementation of Local Traffic Control will be announced on the VHF channel for the relevant sector and the Harbour Service Launch will display blue flashing lights for the duration.

3. Mariners intending to transit the area under Local Traffic Control are required to contact 'Thames Patrol' on the VHF channel for the relevant sector and must follow any instructions given by the officers in attendance.

LONDON VTS

1. London VTS comprises three VTS Sectors run from two control centres. The principal control centre is the Port Control Centre at Gravesend, from which the Estuary and River Sectors are managed, and the secondary control centre is the Thames Barrier Navigation Centre at Woolwich from which the Barrier Sector is managed. Both are contactable via the using the Callsign '**LONDON VTS**' on the relevant VHF Channels as detailed below:

1.1. Port Control Centre, Gravesend:
    a) **VTS Estuary Sector**: Outer Limits to Sea Reach No. 4 - **VHF Ch. 69**
    b) **VTS River Sector**: Sea Reach No. 4 to Crayfordness – **VHF Ch. 68**

1.2. Thames Barrier Navigation Centre, Woolwich:
    a) **VTS Barrier Sector**: Crayfordness to Teddington Lock – **VHF Ch. 14**

2. Reporting Vessels must report to London VTS as detailed on charts, as well as sailing directions and the Admiralty List of Radio Signals. This information is also detailed in the London VTS Operational Information document which can be accessed at: https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/londonvtsoperationalinformation2018.pdf.

3. Refer to the Contact Us section on page 3 for details of how to contact London VTS via telephone. More information on Reporting Vessels can be found in the General Directions for Navigation in the Port of London *(see REPORTING)*.

4. REQUESTS FOR VESSELS TO PROCEED WITH CAUTION OR AT SLOW SPEED

4.1. When a reduction on vessel traffic speed is required, the term Speed Reduction or "Proceed at Slow Speed" is used by London VTS in appropriate broadcasts.

4.2. The following should be noted by Masters, Berth Operators and other river users when requiring speed reductions requests be broadcast:

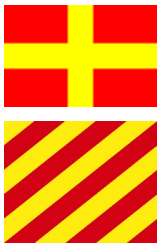
4.2.1. As a guide, requests for reduction in speed are appropriate for activities such as diving, salvage, heavy lifting, working on the waterline from scaffolding or pontoon/small boat, and bunkering operations. They may also be appropriate where the mooring facilities are limited e. g. when the vessel overhangs the berth or when a vessel is about to take the ground at a Not always Afloat but Safely Aground (NAABSA) berth.

4.2.2. A request for a reduction in speed of passing traffic should not be sought as an alternative to good seamanship such as the proper tending of lines and moorings in a tideway.

4.3. When London VTS has agreed to broadcast a reduction in speed:

i) The activity requiring the speed reduction will be identified in the broadcast, from which Mariners should judge the speed appropriate to the circumstances.

ii) The person responsible for the request must ensure that the vessel or installation concerned is displaying the international code flags "Romeo Yankee" by day and illuminated rigid replica by night. Failure to do so will result in the termination of the broadcast.



Romeo Yankee

iii) London VTS should be informed as soon as there is no longer the requirement for a speed reduction and the Romeo Yankee signal removed. The speed reduction broadcast by London VTS will also be terminated.

MARINE ENGINEERS

1. For a full list of Marine Engineers operating within the Port of London, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=55

MARINE SERVICES

1. The PLA's dedicated Marine Services team provides essential support to commercial and leisure users of the river. They ensure channels are clearly marked with lights and buoys, and provide a base for boat lifts and repairs. For more information visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Marine-Services

MARINE SURVEYORS

1. For a full list of Marine Surveyors operating within the Port of London, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=108

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

1. For all media enquiries visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/News/Media-Centre-Contacts

NON-TIDAL THAMES

1. For information concerning the non-tidal river Thames upriver of Teddington Lock, visit: *https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-thames-locks-and-facilities-for-boaters

2. For information about inland waterways, visit the Canal & River Trust's website: *https://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/canal-and-river-network

NOTICES TO AGENTS, BERTHS AND SHIP OPERATORS

1. Notices to Agents, Berth and Ship Operators (NABSO) provide essential, up to date information and advice to those supporting navigation and commercial shipping in the Port of London. Subjects will include (but not be limited to) advice on PLA procedures and/or requirements and notification of new and updated rules and regulations for navigation.

2. To view our current Notices to Agents, Berths and Ship Operators visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/Notices-to-Agents-Berths-and-Ship-Operators/

NOTICES TO MARINERS

1. Notices to Mariners provide essential, up to date information and advice to those supporting navigation and commercial shipping in the Port of London. Subjects will include (but not be limited to) advice on PLA procedures and/or requirements and notification of new and updated rules and regulations for navigation.

2. If you are carrying out works on the tidal river Thames, you may be required to have a Notice to Mariners issued. Contact our Harbour Master team via email at harbourmaster@pla.co.uk to discuss if this is applicable to you.

3. To view our current Notices to Mariners and subscribe to updates visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/ntm/

PASSENGER PIERS

1. For a list of all Passenger Piers on the Thames, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Travel/London-by-River/Passenger-Piers/

2. For further information, visit Transport for London's website: *https://tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/stations-stops-and-piers/?intcmp=55&intcmp=55907

PERSONAL WATER CRAFT (PWC)

1. The Thames Code for Personal Water Craft highlight all the important information relevant to the use of Personal Water Craft on the tidal Thames. Visit https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/plapwcguidedigital.pdf to access the code.

2. **Remember: Do not use a PWC upriver of Lower Hope Point or enter restricted areas.**

PILOTAGE

1. Pilotage is compulsory in the London Pilotage District as detailed in the table below:

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Pilotage is compulsory at all times for the parameters listed against each area.

≥ greater than or equal to
LOA as defined in the Pilotage Directions 3(1) f)</td><td colspan="3">Compulsory Pilotage (Pilot or PEC)</td></tr>
<tr><td>West of the Margaretness Limit</td><td>West of Sea Reach No.1</td><td>East of Sea Reach No.1</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">All vessels including Tugs & Tows</td><td rowspan="3">≥ 40m LOA or
≥ 4m draught</td><td>≥ 80m LOA</td><td>≥ 90m LOA</td></tr>
<tr><td>≥ 50m LOA and
≥ 5m draught</td><td>≥ 50m LOA and
≥ 6m draught</td></tr>
<tr><td>All Vessels including Tugs & Tows which are:
• Passenger Vessels
• Specified Vessels
• Carrying marine pollutants in bulk</td><td>≥ 50m LOA</td><td>≥ 50m LOA</td></tr>
</table>

2. During periods of Restricted Visibility, Pilotage is compulsory for all vessels between 50m LOA and 90m LOA with an Operating Draught ≥ 4m (≥ 5 metres East of Sea Reach No.1).

3. **The following vessels are excepted from compulsory Pilotage:**
UK Warships and vessels in the long term service of HM Customs & Excise, Border Force and Trinity House in any part of the London Pilotage District.

4. For further information about our Pilotage Service including details on how to order a Pilot visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Pilotage.

PILOT BOARDING AREAS

1. There are various Pilot Boarding Areas for the Port of London dependant on the size and draft of the vessel. A visual guide of the various Pilot Boarding Areas is available at: https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/pilotstations2.pdf. (This information is also available on charts and in the Admiralty Sailing Directions). For accurate details, include other operational information, visit:
https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/londonvtsoperationalinformation2018.pdf.

PILOTAGE DIRECTIONS

1. The Port of London Authority (PLA), as a Competent Harbour Authority within the meaning of the Pilotage Act 1987, and in the exercise of its powers under Section 7 of that Act, gives Pilotage Directions to the Masters of vessels in the London Pilotage District.

2. In order to maintain and enhance safety of navigation within the Thames, it is important that Masters and watchkeepers are aware of current Port of London Byelaws, Directions and Notices to Mariners. It is therefore vital that owners/agents ensure that all such relevant information and publications are promptly distributed to vessels.

3. It is the duty of the Master of a vessel to which a Pilotage Direction applies to comply with that Direction.

4. Failure by the Master of a vessel to comply with a Direction constitutes an offence, and renders that person liable, on conviction, to a fine up to level 5 on the standard scale. However, it is a defence for the Master of a vessel to prove that he had reasonable grounds for supposing that compliance with the Direction in question would be likely to imperil his vessel or that he had a reasonable excuse for his act or failure to act.

5. The Pilotage Directions for the Port of London are available to download from our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/Pilotage-Directions-for-the-Port-of-London

PILOTAGE EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE (PEC)

1. For information on how to apply for a Pilotage Exemption Certificate, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Pilotage/Pilotage-Exemption-Certificates-PECs.

POLLUTION PREVENTION

1. For guidance on pollution prevention, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Pollution-Prevention

PORT BUSINESS DIRECTORY

1. The Port Business Directory includes links to all services, facilities and terminals available in the Port of London. For more information visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Port-Trade/Port-Business-Directory

PORT OF TILBURY & TILBURY 2

1. Forth Ports Port of Tilbury & Tilbury 2 is another major port on the river Thames. It is also the largest multi-modal port in the South East.

2. Vessels arriving at the Port of Tilbury & Tilbury 2 are advised that Forth Ports have their own Marine Guidelines and Vessel information which is available to download from their website: *https://www.forthports.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/POTLL-PMSC-OP-09-04-Ports-of-Tilbury-and-Tilbury-2-Marine-Guidelines-and-Port-Information.pdf.

PORT SERVICES DIRECTORY

1. For a full directory of services offered within the Port of London, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?site=commercial

RECREATIONAL USERS

1. We have a dedicated website for recreational river users. Our https://www.boatingonthethames.co.uk/ website includes all the necessary information to safely navigate the tidal Thames.

2. We have a separate dedicated website for all Sport and Physical activity on the tidal Thames. Head over to https://www.activethames.co.uk/ to check it out.

3. We have produced a Recreational User guide which can be downloaded from: https://boatingonthethames.co.uk/recreational-users-guide-boating-on-the-thames/. To order a large scale hard copy, printed on waterproof paper email us at Marine.Compliance@pla.co.uk or Corporate.Affairs@pla.co.uk

4. For a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding recreational river use, visit https://boatingonthethames.co.uk/about-contact-us-boating-on-the-thames-port-of-london-authority/.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. For vessel reporting requirements refer to our General Directions: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/PLA-General-Directions.

2. Further information is also available in our Operational Information document: https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/londonvtsoperationalinformation2018.pdf

RICHMOND LOCK & WEIR

1. The Port of London Authority owns and operates Richmond Lock and Weir, which is also the base for the upper Thames harbour service patrols between Putney and Teddington Lock. For more information about Richmond Lock & Weir, including charges for using the lock, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/Richmond-Lock-and-Weir

2. For current information please contact the Lock Foreman on 0208 940 0634.

3. See also *EXCLUSION ZONES, 1.3 Richmond Lock & Weir* for information about exclusion zones in this area.

RIVER CRUISES

1. For a list of the various River Cruise operators and other passenger vessel operators, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=101

RIVER WORKS

1. Under Section 66 of the Port of London Act, a River Works Licence is required for any works in the River Thames, riverward of the mean high water mark and regardless of ownership of the river bed, including any works under the river or overhanging the river. This process ensures that all developments in the river are assessed for their potential effect on safety of navigation and the environment. For more information visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/licensing

SAFETY

1. Through the Port of London Act 1968 (as amended), the Port of London Authority has the primary responsibility of maintaining the safety of navigation and supporting the safety of vessels, the general public and all users of 95 miles of the tidal River Thames.
2. It should be noted that, vessel operators are required to have their own Safety Management System. Terminals, Berths and Marinas are required to comply with Port Marine Safety Code.

3. The PLA's management of navigational safety is in full compliance of standards set in the Port Marine Safety Code. Our Navigational Safety Policy is available at: https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/navigationalsafetypolicy.pdf.

4. For any Safety related queries, contact us via email at Marine.Compliance@pla.co.uk or by phone (+44) (0)1474 562200

SEWAGE DISCHARGE

1. Discharge of untreated sewage is prohibited. Vessels should adhere to UK and International regulations for the discharge of sewage, including the Thames Byelaws (Byelaw 49), and PLA General Directions (General Direction 10). Vessels should also adhere to any restrictions/requirements of the berth owner/operator.
2. PLA Byelaw 49 came into force on 1 January 2015. The Byelaw prevents the discharge of sewage into the Thames from specified vessels, consistent with the continuing improvement of the Thames environment, particularly with Thames Water's project to stop the discharge of untreated sewage into the river, and brings the Thames into line with a number of other UK harbours and inland waterways.

3. For further information visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Prohibition-of-discharge-of-sewage-to-the-Thames

4. Guidance for operators wishing to provide sewage discharge services is available at: https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Byelaw-49-Service-Providers

SHIP AGENTS

1. For a full list of Ship Agents and Brokers operating on the Thames visit: https://pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=72

2. For cruise ship agents, visit: https://pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=59

SHIP TOWAGE

1. A full list of all Ship Towage Tugs (including operational information) which operate in the Port of London is available on our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Vessel-Licensing/Ship-Towage-Tugs

2. The towage operators contact details are available on our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=80

3. The PLA has produced a Code of Practice for Ship Towage Operations on the Thames which is available on our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/Code-of-Practice-for-Ship-Towage-Operations-on-the-Thames

4. As per the Vessel Licensing Byelaws 2014, Ship Towage Tugs are required to have a licence issued by the PLA, for information on this visit our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Vessel-Licensing/Ship-Towage-Tugs

SPEED LIMITS

1. As per the Thames Byelaws (Byelaw 16), speed (through water) limits apply to various parts of the tidal Thames. Please see below the speed limit for the relevant part of the Thames:

1.1. **8 KNOT SPEED LIMIT APPLIES IN:**

a) The Thames above Wandsworth Bridge;
b) Deptford Creek;
c) The River Lee or Bow Creek;
d) Barking Creek;
e) Dartford Creek;
f) The creeks to the north and west of Canvey Island and of the island known as Leigh Marsh or Two Tree Island, which are:
   i) Holehaven, Vange and Pitsea creeks north of line drawn from Holehaven Point on a bearing 270°T; and
   ii) Leigh Creek, Hadleigh Ray, Benfleet and East Haven Creeks west of line drawn from Canvey Point on a bearing 000°T to the Leigh-on-Sea shore; and
g) Yantlet Creek

1.2. **EXCEPTIONS TO THE 8 KNOT SPEED LIMIT APPLY TO THE FOLLOWING:**

a) Where the vessel is being used for search and rescue, fire brigade, ambulance, law enforcement, public or recreational safety, security or police purposes or for training for such purposes or for the purposes of the harbourmaster, if the observance of this limit would be likely to hinder that use of the vessel; or
b) where a vessel, has been approved by a harbourmaster as one which may exceed a speed of 8 knots through the water, is engaged in escorting a rowing boat in training;
c) where the vessel is being used in connection with any activity involving the use of personal water craft, water-skiing, parakiting or aquaplaning in an area authorised by the PLA or;
d) where the vessel has been approved by the harbourmaster to exceed a speed of 8 knots through the water, in connection with a river event that is subject to the requirements of byelaw 9, and if it does so in accordance with such approval.

1.3. **12 KNOT SPEED LIMIT APPLIES IN:**

Between Wandsworth Bridge and Margaretness Limit.

1.4. **EXCEPTIONS TO THE 12 KNOT SPEED LIMIT APPLY TO THE FOLLOWING:**

a) If the vessel falls within the exceptions described under the 8 knot speed limit exceptions;
b) where a vessel, has been approved by the harbourmaster as one which may exceed a speed of 12 knots through the water, is engaged in
   i) escorting a rowing boat in training;
   ii) escorting a boat race or regatta; or

b) where the vessel has been approved by the harbourmaster to exceed a speed of 12 knots through the water, in connection with a river event that is subject to the requirements of byelaw 9, and if it does so in accordance with such approval.
c) where the harbourmaster has issued a **certificate of compliance**, which allows the vessel, subject to continued compliance with the International Collision Regulations (as modified by these byelaws), to navigate up to but not exceeding a speed of:
   i) 25 knots through, on or over the water in the area of the Thames between Wandsworth Bridge and Lambeth Bridge; and
   ii) 30 knots through, on or over the water in the area of the Thames between St Saviour's Dock and the Margaretness limit.
d) The master of a power-driven vessel operating under a valid **certificate of compliance** referred to above, must ensure that it does not exceed a speed of 15 knots through, on or over the water when navigating through the Thames Barrier in the designated No Anchoring Area, provided that this does not apply if the vessel falls within the exceptions described under the 8 knot speed limit exceptions.

2. Except in an emergency, the master of a power-driven vessel must, at all times when underway on the Thames, ensure that the vessel is navigated at a speed and in a manner such that any wash or draw-off created by the vessel must not compromise:
   a) the safety of others using the Thames, the foreshore, adjacent piers, moorings, berths, jetties or other facilities; or
   b) the integrity of the foreshore.

3. **Note:** A **certificate of compliance** will only be issued when a vessel operator can demonstrate compliance with the relevant provisions of the High Speed Craft Code and the Small Commercial Vessel Code together with the International Safety Management Code, and the carriage and use of AIS.

4. Further details of the requirements to be met for the issue of a certificate of compliance can be obtained from the harbourmaster by emailing harbourmaster@pla.co.uk.

5. If, as a result of compliance with a mandatory speed limit, a planing vessel produces unacceptable wash at 12 knots, the master should reduce speed further to ensure that the vessel produces safe levels of wash.

6. A **certificate of compliance** for the purposes of this byelaw is not to be taken as compliance for the purposes of any other requirement in PLA byelaws, general directions or provisions in the Act.

7. For more information, read the Thames Byelaws which are available on our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/1090thamesbyelaws.pdf.

8. See also section *WASH AND DRAW OFF*.

TERMINALS DIRECTORY

1. For a full list of all Terminals on the tidal Thames, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Port-Trade/Port-services/Terminal-Directory.

2. An interactive terminal map is also available on our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Port-Trade/Interactive-Terminal-Map

THAMES AIS

1. Thames AIS was introduced in 2007 as a key navigational safety tool to improve the situational awareness of vessels navigating on the River Thames and to provide additional safety critical information to London VTS. Thames AIS consists of a class 'A' transponder with, for certain categories of vessel, additional elements including a geographic display unit and the ability to transmit the number of passengers and crew onboard.

2. As per the Thames Byelaws (Byelaw 12), the following categories of vessel must carry Thames AIS if they intend to navigate between Denton and Richmond Lock:
    a) Class IV, V and VI passenger vessels.

3. The following categories of vessel must carry Thames AIS if they intend to navigate between Margaretness and Richmond Lock:
    a) Vessels of more than 40m in length overall
    b) Vessels having a gross tonnage of over 50 tons
    c) Vessels engaged in towing or pushing operations
    d) Specified vessels or vessels carrying marine pollutants in bulk
    e) Vessels holding a Certificate of Compliance under Byelaw 16.3

4. For full details on Thames AIS visit our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Thames-AIS/

THAMES BARRIER CONTROL ZONE

1. The Thames Barrier is one of the largest movable flood barriers in the world. The Environment Agency runs and maintains the Thames Barrier as well as London's other flood defences.

2. A permanent Control Zone, encompassing the Thames Barrier, is established between Margaretness and Blackwall Point. All vessels navigating within the Control Zone are subject to the requirements of current General Directions.
3. The Thames Barrier consists of nine piers numbered 1 to 9 from north to south and ten spans lettered A to K from south to north (see Figures 1 & 2 below):
    a) **Spans B to G** are open to navigation subject to the restrictions in current General Directions.
    b) **Spans C, D, E and F** are 61m wide with a depth of 5.8m below Chart Datum.

c) **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.

d) **Spans A, H, J and K** are permanently closed to navigation.

4. 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.

4.1. Note: D span may be used by large inward bound vessels.

Figure 1

View Looking Westwards / Upstream

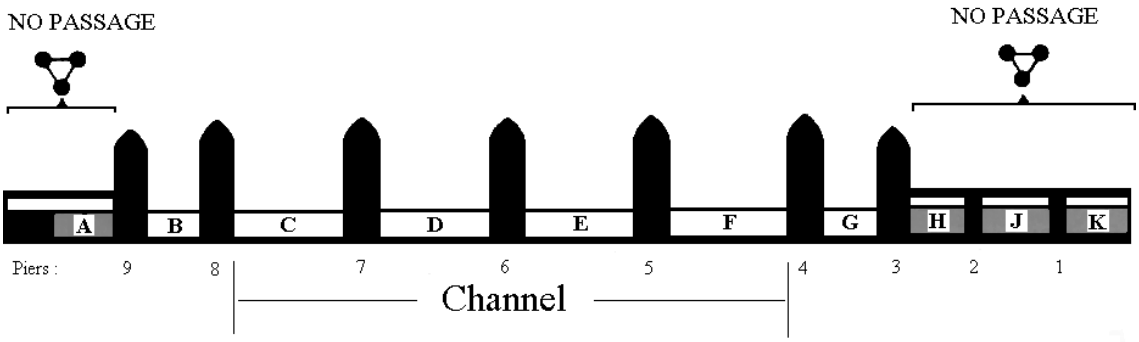
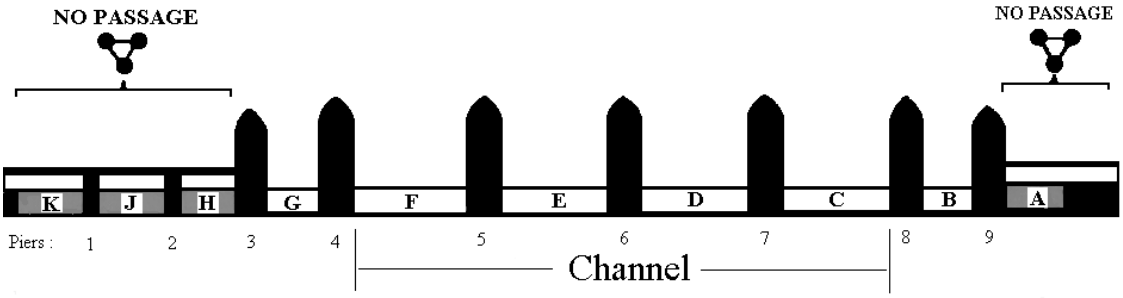


Figure 2

View Looking Eastwards / Downstream



5. **NAVIGATION LIGHT SIGNALS AND SHAPES**

5.1. **LIGHT SIGNALS**

Each navigational span of the Thames Barrier has an array of traffic signals on the ends of the adjacent piers to indicate the spans open to navigation and those that are closed. The light signals will be displayed both by day and by night. Spans are open only to traffic in a single direction at any one time. The intensity of the light signals may be varied by the Thames Barrier Navigation Centre (London VTS) on request.

5.2. **SPANS OPEN TO NAVIGATION**

Green Arrows will be exhibited from the ends of piers either side of the span(s) open to navigation. The arrows point inwards towards the span open to navigation from a particular direction.

5.3. **SPANS CLOSED TO NAVIGATION**

Red Crosses will be exhibited from the ends of the piers either side of span(s) closed to navigation from one or both directions.

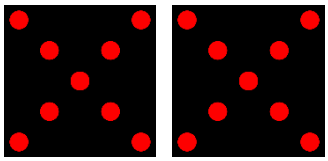
5.4. **SPANS PERMANENTLY CLOSED TO NAVIGATION**

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 River Byelaws for closed bridge arches, namely:

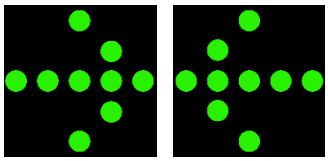
a) By day, three red discs 0.6m in diameter at the points of an equilateral triangle, with the apex downward and the base horizontal.
b) By night, three red lights in similar positions to the discs displayed by day.

5.5. **Figure 3**

Illuminated Signals on Piers



Red Crosses - Span Closed



Green Arrows - Span Open

5.6. **FOG LIGHTS**

High intensity fixed white lights are situated at the ends of piers 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 and are operated in conjunction with green arrows in reduced visibility. The lights may be switched on or off, or the intensity varied by the Thames Barrier Navigation Centre (London VTS) on request.

6. **TYPES OF BARRIER CLOSURE**

The Thames Barrier will be closed under the following circumstances:

a) **Emergency (Full) Closures** - For flood prevention in the event of a surge tide warning and other emergencies. In normal circumstances, notice of a potential flood protection closure will be given approximately 12 hours before the predicted high water at the Thames Barrier.
b) **Test (Full) Closures** - For the purpose of testing the Thames Barrier machinery and carrying out experiments to improve closure methods. Closures will be promulgated by Notice to Mariners published every six months. Such closures may occur at any state of the tide. Mariners, owners, and agents are advised to retain these Notices to Mariners, as no further notice will be given until 24 hours before the closure.
c) **Partial Closures** - For maintenance, other works and training. On occasions it is necessary to close individual spans for maintenance or training. A single floodgate can be in the defence or maintenance position for a prolonged period of time. The span closed signals will be displayed, and vessels are prohibited from approaching these spans.

6.1. **Note:** When a gate is in the defence position next to a span open to navigation, mariners are advised that variations to the normal current direction and velocity may be experienced.

7. **ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC CONTROL PROCEDURES DURING A FULL THAMES BARRIER CLOSURE**

Vessels programmed to transit the Thames Barrier during a full closure will be subject to the following Traffic Control Procedures:

a) Inward bound seagoing vessels proceeding to berths above the Thames Barrier will be instructed to anchor in a Designated Anchorage by London VTS.
b) Outward bound seagoing vessels from berths upstream of the Thames Barrier will be directed to remain on the berth by London VTS possibly via the berth operator or agent.
c) Non-seagoing vessels will be directed to appropriate moorings and berths.
d) The approximate time of the Thames Barrier re-opening will normally be known at the same time as closure commences and will be passed to vessels directed to wait.

7.1. **Note:** If the flood prevention barriers situated at Tilbury Lock, Barking Creek, Dartford Creek, and Benfleet Creek are to be closed to navigation, traffic will be similarly directed as in a) to c). Individual instructions will be passed by London VTS as appropriate.

THAMES BYELAWS

1. The Port of London Authority in exercise of its powers under sections 162, 167 and 168 of the Port of London Act 1968 makes the Thames Byelaws, also known as the Port of London Thames Byelaws 2012. The byelaws relate to the management and regulation of marine operations and navigation in the Port of London. To read the Thames Byelaws, visit our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/1090thamesbyelaws.pdf.

THAMES GREEN SCHEME

1. The Thames Green Scheme is an independent environmental performance indicator for UK inland waterways commercial and services operators to demonstrate their environmental performance for elements including on air quality, carbon, energy, water quality, litter, and waste. Read more about the green scheme on our website: https://greenscheme.pla.co.uk/

THAMES OIL SPILL CLEARANCE ASSOCIATION (TOSCA)

1. In readiness for any pollution incident, the PLA-managed Thames Oil Spill Clearance Association (TOSCA) provides a 24-hour response to oil spills between Tower Bridge and Canvey Island.
2. Funded in part by the terminals that handle oil and oil products, the service has two purpose-built craft, each designed to collect and/or contain oil in the first critical hours after a spillage.

3. The Port of London Authority (PLA) in conjunction with the local industry established Thames Oil Spill Clearance Associated (TOSCA) as a 24 hour, 7 days a week marine oil spill response unit, in compliance with the passenger and IMO legislation. For more information on TOSCA, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/TOSCA.

THAMES VISION 2050

1. Launched in 2022, the Thames Vision 2050 is the development strategy for the tidal Thames running from Teddington Lock, through the heart of London out to the commercial port and estuary. The Vision is built around three interconnected themes, centred on the role the river plays for people and the environment. For more information about the project, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/The-Thames-Vision.

TIDAL THAMES NAVIGATORS CLUB

1. The Tidal Thames Navigators Club has been created to give recreational boaters easy access to information for their navigation on the tidal Thames.

2. The club is FREE to join, and its main aim is to provide direct communication between the Port of London Authority and all recreational boaters.

3. For more information about the Tidal Thames Navigators Club visit: https://www.boatingonthethames.co.uk/tidal-thames-navigators-club-boating-on-the-thames-port-of-london-authority/.

TIDES & TIDAL INFORMATION

1. The Thames from the Teddington Lock to the North Sea is a tidal river. Our Hydrographic department have produced a collection of tidal information which is available on our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Hydrography/Tidal-Information

2. Information on our website includes:
    a) Live tides
    b) Tide Prediction Tool
    c) Tide tables (readable and downloadable)
    d) Tidal Thames App
    e) Tide Differences
    f) Definitions and notes

3. For any queries, please contact PLA Hydrographic Service at: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Hydrography or call +44 (0)1474 562207

TIDEWAY CODE

1. Navigating any type of small recreational vessel on the tidal Thames, or Thames Tideway as it is also known, requires knowledge of the river and how it operates. The Tideway is by far the busiest inland waterway in the UK which, coupled with a fast-flowing tide and many bridges, piers and moorings, creates a challenging waterway on which to navigate.

2. The Tideway Code – aimed at both rowers and paddlers – has been produced by the Port of London Authority (PLA), Thames Regional Rowing Council (TRRC) and British Canoeing (BC) to advise both new and existing users who plan to navigate anywhere along the tidal Thames between Teddington Lock and the Sea. You can download a digital copy of The Tideway Code at: https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/tidewaycodedigital.pdf.

VESSEL DRAFT INFORMATION

1. Agents, berth and ship operators are reminded of the importance of supplying the correct vessel draught at the time of ordering a Pilot via PISCES. Accurate detail is critical and where this information is incorrectly provided, or frequently changes, there is an increased likelihood of a delay in the provision of a pilot.

2. In the event of any change in draft, agents, berth and ship operators are reminded to update PISCES with the correct information in reasonable time. Failure to do so may result in a delay to the vessel.

3. *See also section CALCULATING VESSEL DRAFTS.*

VESSEL LICENSING

1. The Port of London Authority, through powers granted to it by the Port of London Act 1968 (as amended) is responsible for the licensing of inland waterways vessels operating commercially on the tidal Thames. Vessels operating on the tidal Thames are required to be licensed by the PLA, unless they are certificated by another recognised authority, such as the Maritime & Coastguard Agency, another navigation authority or local authority.

2. For information about Vessel Licensing, including how to apply for a commercial vessel licence visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Vessel-Licensing/Vessel-Licensing. For our Vessel Licensing Byelaws visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/vessellicensingbyelaws2014.pdf.

3. For a list of Frequently Asked Questions about Vessel Licensing visit our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Vessel-Licensing/Vessel-Licensing-Frequently-Asked-Questions

VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICES

1. For Vessel Traffic Services, see 'LONDON VTS'.

VISITOR MOORINGS

1. A full list of Visitor Moorings on the tidal Thames is available on our dedicated recreational river user website https://www.boatingonthethames.co.uk/ You must obtain permission from the berth or mooring owner/provider before using any facility.

2. The PLA also own and manage some visitor moorings – to make enquiries, please call: +44 (0)1474 562421 or email VisitorMoorings@pla.co.uk

3. Where the information has been provided to us, details of the type of mooring, the facilities available, or any length restrictions, etc. are shown by viewing the interactive map: https://www.boatingonthethames.co.uk/interactive-map-boating-on-the-thames-port-of-london-authority/. You should discuss your vessel and its suitability for the visitor mooring with the mooring owner upon booking.

4. **Note:** Due to the tidal nature of the River Thames, the majority of marinas have restricted access at certain times of day. You should contact marinas directly to confirm appropriate lock in times.

WASH AND DRAW-OFF

1. As the master of a power-driven vessel on the River Thames, you bear a responsibility for the safety of passengers, crew, fellow river users, and the environment. The disturbance caused by your vessel moving through the water, known as "wash," and the interaction between vessels, known as "draw-off," can pose significant dangers.

2. **Vessel Wash:** Wash, essentially the waves produced by a vessel displacing water, varies in size and intensity based on vessel size, speed, hull shape, and water conditions.

3. **Draw-Off (Vessel Interaction)**: Draw-off occurs when two or more vessels are in motion in close proximity, resulting in hydrodynamic forces that can pull nearby vessels from their moorings.

4. **Dangers Include:**
   - Risk to houseboat occupants, including falling items.
   - Damage to smaller vessels, which may capsize.
   - Hazards to swimmers and divers due to turbulence.
   - Environmental harm from disturbed ecosystems.

- Disruptions in navigation and potential shoreline damage.
- Noise pollution affecting marine life.
- Erosion of coastal areas.

5. The Port of London Authority (PLA) receives numerous incident reports annually, with a substantial portion being wash complaints in specific areas. Legal consequences can include fines, and reporting offenses is encouraged to improve safety. Various factors influence vessel wash, emphasising the need for vigilance and compliance with regulations to ensure safety and protect the environment.

6. To report a Wash or Draw-off incident, visit our website: https://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/SMS/Near-Miss-Safety-Observations-and-Incident-Reporting

7. Houseboat residents should submit wash or draw-off reports via the following online form with as much information as possible: https://uk.core.resolver.com/#/go/c9d52f64a0f43fc7d44cac789bf0febd0c80cf0454a2535f925bedb84dd55c85a87b6fb8210c42eb7586331037ed84c798dc2c8017b77c5df9482e9e1f5bf224

WASTE DISPOSAL

1. For information regarding Waste Disposal in the tidal Thames area, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/Waste-Management-Plan

2. For a list of Waste Disposal providers, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/handbook/port_community.cfm?flag=3&class_id=87

WATER DENSITY

1. Information regarding observed water density readings is available at: https://www.pla.co.uk/Hydrography/River-Density-Readings.

2. These are provided to serve as a guide only for water densities that may be encountered on the Thames. The PLA accepts no responsibility as to their accuracy.

3. Density measurements vary temporally throughout the day and year and are significantly affected by local variations in salinity and temperature.

4. It is recommended that for density values to be used for draft or freshwater allowance calculations, that in situ measurements taken at the location of the vessel or terminal.

WATER SAFETY

1. We are committed to reducing the number of people who drown in the tidal Thames, either accidentally or through suicide.

2. As a founder member of the Tidal Thames Water Safety Forum (TTWSF), we work alongside HM Coastguard, RNLI, London Fire Brigade, Metropolitan Police (Marine Policing Unit), London Ambulance Service, City of London Corporation, Transport for London and City of London Police.

3. Together we are working to make the river a safe place for all users, including dog walkers and joggers on the foreshore, who may become stranded due to the river's fast moving tides, and people visiting riverside pubs and restaurants.

4. For more information on Water Safety, visit: https://www.pla.co.uk/WaterSafety.

WATCH YOUR WASH

PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY

As a vessel Master of a power-driven vessel, in determining safe speed in respect of wash or draw-off, you should consider these factors*:

Your **speed** through the water

Rate of **acceleration** or **deceleration**

Hull form and wash/draw-off **characteristics**

The **manoeuvring characteristics** of the vessel

The strength and direction of the **wind**

Activities underway on the water, foreshore or berths, moorings and facilities which may be **vulnerable** to wash or draw-off

Requests from **London VTS** or **Notices to Mariners,** to proceed with caution or at slow speed

The **density** and type of **vessel traffic** and the potential for the build-up of a **cumulative wash** or draw off

*This list may not be exhaustive. The Master is always responsible for their vessel and it's conduct. By providing this information, the Port of London Authority does so in good faith and for the safety of river users, and does not accept responsibility for vessel conduct.

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