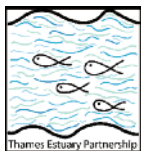


# Holehaven birds and barges

## Working Together:

## Pitsea Operational Management

### Meet the team:



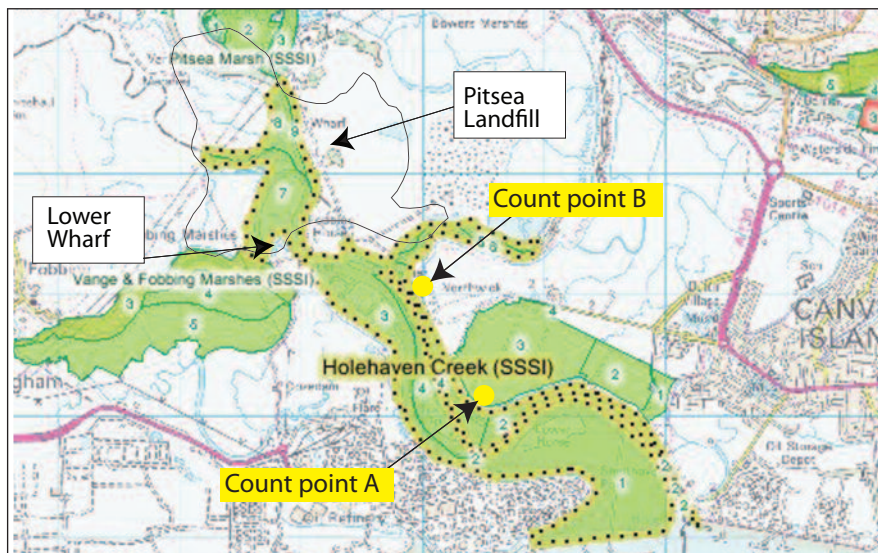
The plan has been developed by the Pitsea Barge Impact Group, which is a group of organisations to provide an agreed procedure for sustainable transport of materials by barge to Pitsea. Holehaven Creek is an SSSI because it supports nationally important numbers of Black Tailed Godwits.

As occupiers, operators and owners, each member of the group has responsibilities to fulfill the plan and for the SSSI management.

Barges are being filled from development projects in London and the material that is suitable is being brought down to Pitsea to cap the landfill site by 2016. Each barge equates to 40 lorries, so road traffic is significantly reduced in the area as a result.

### Monitoring of the birds

 Holehaven Creek SSSI  
Bird Survey Zones



The barges are navigationally restricted to 2hrs either side of high tide, and pass around the Upper and Lower Horse as they are partially exposed. These two islands of saltmarsh with muddy fringes are used by the Black Tailed Godwit and other important birds like the Curlew to roost and feed.

Monitoring of the birds in the Creek has been carried out in the past via the national Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) programme, but additional monitoring was required to assess any changes in the creek around the barge movements. Monitoring approved by Natural England during the winter and at night is being managed by RSPB and Veolia for 2012–2013. The results of this will help inform the PLA and Natural England on the future of the plan.

### Get Involved:

Records of the bird activity in the creek with and without any boats are very useful to the project group. If you visit regularly or are a new visitor, it would be useful to have your sightings. Please let us know on [environment@pla.co.uk](mailto:environment@pla.co.uk)

# Why the tugs bring barges

## Constraints:

*The tugs and towed barges can only enter the creek when there is enough water below them. So they come up on a rising tide and leave on a falling tide, or before it falls.*

*The tugs can only collect material from London within 'working hours' (0800-1800 or day light hours).*

*Due to the sites protections, the tugs need to operate in a way that avoids significantly disturbing the birds during the winter period. In practice, weather and mechanical or staff issues mean that the tugs cannot run every day.*

*This has forced operators to request to work night-time tides as well as daytime tides, in order to meet their contractual requirements. In response, the Regulatory Barge Impact Group has agreed to allow a 'Trial' of barge movements during extended working hours during this 2012/13 winter period, with supporting monitoring (of bird disturbance, etc.,) to provide site evidence of any potential impacts to the special wildlife interest and departures from agreed operations. For example, the tugs are not allowed to undertake barge operations during severe freezing conditions.*

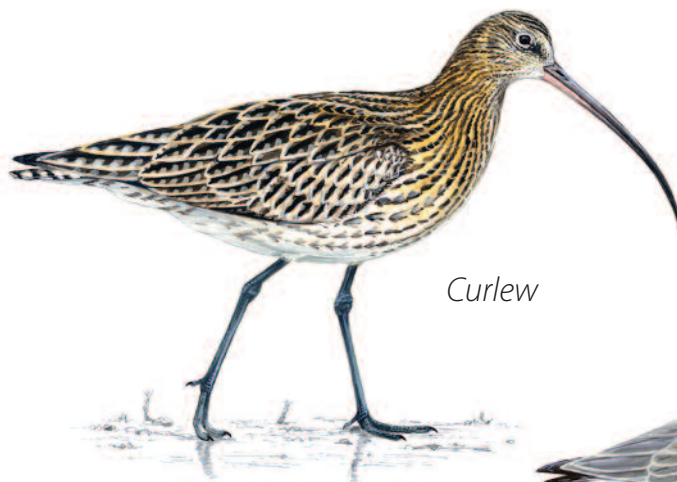
The landfill site at Pitsea Creek needs material to cap it. This will allow it to be managed as a reserve once it closes in 2016. In order to be covered to the agreed design, it needs around 3 million tonnes of material.

The barges can bring the equivalent of 80 lorries at one time from projects wanting to get rid of material in London. In a month the barges can currently deliver almost 10,000 tonnes, keeping over 400 lorries off the road.

Large demolition and tunneling projects in London need to move large amounts of material very quickly. If they are near to the river the PLA encourages the use of the river for transport to alleviate the load on London's roads.



Due to the small number of sites along the Thames at which materials can be discharged, many projects are forced to go around the coast or dump at sea, but with access to Pitsea the current operators, S.W. Walsh are able to provide a service with a relatively small number of vessels and crew.



Curlew



Black Tailed Godwit