

PLA HARBOUR MASTER'S RECREATIONAL NAVIGATION GROUP

Notes of the meeting held at Pinnacle House on 24th March 2016

Present:

Mark Towns (*Chairman*) PLA, Harbour Master Upper (HMU)
Darren Knight PLA, Deputy Harbour Master (Safety Management)
Jon Beckett PLA, Assistant Harbour Master Recreational

James Fraser BMB, Tideway West
Kevin East British Canoeing
Tony Reynolds TRRC Rowing Safety Advisor
Bill Mitchell TRRC PLA Liaison Officer
Harry Whelan Kayaking in London
Richard Hart Association of Thames Yacht Clubs
Barry Singleton Dutch Barge Association
Banny National Community Boats Association
Alex Hester Chelsea Kayak Club
Roger Squires Inland Waterway Association
Chris Winnington-Ingram Corinthians Trust
Pamela Chart Association of Thames Yacht Clubs
Paul Hyman Active360 (Standup Paddleboarding)
Dan Hyman Active360 (Standup Paddleboarding)
Steven Angell Active360 (Standup Paddleboarding)

Apologies:

Trevor Window PLA Marine River Inspector
Michael Shefras RYA Thames Valley and London Region / ATYC
David Jones Association of Thames Yacht Clubs
Mike Thomas Dragon Boating
Mike Wardle Shadwell Basin Activity Centre

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Minutes of the PHRNG held on 13th October 2015 were approved.

3. Actions from Last Meeting

a. (Ongoing) Ebb tide flag statistics

Red	2	1.32%
Yellow	25	16.45%
Green	98	64.47%
Black	27	17.76%

- b.** Paddling Code framework is to be reviewed by the group and feedback comments to AHMR to assist in the code's development. **Covered by publication review**
- c.** AHMR is to update the PLA's paddling guide, so that it is dated 2015, after a recent update to clarify that paddlers should not follow the Rowing Code. **Action Complete**
- d.** AHMR to send the Recreational Users Guide to Chandleries, marinas and clubs in the Thames region. **Ongoing Action – Chelsea Harbour Marina, Lindon Lewis Marine, Teddington Lock given a box**
- e.** AHMR to continue to develop signage at river entry points informing river users of the speed limit and any applicable local rules. **Ongoing action**

- f. AHMR to give briefings to the ATYC and IWA on the PLA and navigating on the tideway. **2016 IWA meeting cancelled. Next one planned for 9th Jan 2017. ATYC Meeting currently being planned.**

4. Review of Pre-Season Briefing

- a. A summary of the TTNC Pre-season briefing was given.
- b. An Action Matrix has been produced, which includes the points discussed during the Q&A session. See **Appendix C**
- c. The PLA is looking to utilise mooring equipment used for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics to provide visitor moorings at key locations on the river. Such locations should show due consideration for wash or river conditions in that area, as well as being suitable for larger Dutch Barges. Various locations were discussed:
 - i. Erith – to act as a halfway point for journeys into London from the Medway, and visa versa. Good shore access here.
 - ii. Thames Barrier / Woolwich
 - iii. Dartford Creek – for craft waiting for sufficient tide height.
 - iv. Greenhithe

Action: PHRNG members to advise of locations where Visitor Moorings would be most useful. Please send suggestions to jon.beckett@pla.co.uk

For information, the PLA's current list of visitor moorings can be found here:

<https://pla.co.uk/Leisure/Moorings-and-Other-Services>

<http://www.boatingonthames.co.uk/leisureMap.cfm>

Action: AHMR to update the PLA's list of visitor moorings and investigate ways of publicising them.

- d. It was noted that there are mooring facilities available at Greenwich Yacht Club and Woolwich Arsenal Pier also has visitor moorings. The location of current visitor moorings on the river should be better promulgated and advertising of these new moorings would need to be considered.
- e. Wash issues were discussed. An NRAWG – Navigational Risk Assessment Working Group is being taken forward to address issues around ribs and there are also wash trials and a review of the western Thames Clippers passage plan currently taking place.

5. Publications Update

a. Paddling Code of Practice

- i. A first draft of the Paddling Code of Practice was circulated around the table. This is essentially a combination of the PLA's current guidance – including the newly introduced Stand-up Paddlingboarding on the Thames 2015, as well as Paddling on the Thames 2015 and the Be Safe Be Seen guide.
- ii. AHMR will be speaking directly to the paddling clubs to ensure the code includes the right topics. Specific subjects will be given to clubs to give their input on, particularly where that club is specialist in that area – Richmond Canoe Club and racing, K1 and K2 kayaks for example.
- iii. It was suggested that a chart or pocket guide of the paddling code should be produced. This will be considered once the main Code is published.

b. Passenger Vessel Code of Practice

- i. The new Code of Practice for Passenger Vessels will be going out to Public Consultation imminently. It is expected that this consultation will not yield many problems, as there are no new rules or regulations, merely a revamped document.

c. App / TTNC

- i. A forum for TTNC members has been developed and it's hoped this will become live soon.
- ii. A series of successful river trips between Teddington and Woolwich took place in 2015. These will be re-run in May 2016.
- iii. The production of an App was discussed – this has got backing from the Chairman so it's hoped the funds will be available. It is hoped the app will show Notice to Mariners on a map and filter the ones which are relevant to a particular journey on a particular date.
- iv. A question was raised as to whether Notice to Mariners could include the date of the works in the title.

Post meeting note: This has been discussed internally. Adding the date to the title of the notice would make the title long and possibly detract from the important information. Also, the majority of published notices are relevant at this present moment. However, the production of the PLA App would improve the way Notice to Mariners are accessed and would filter the information further.

- v. It was suggested that river users and Lock Keepers should be emailed of barge movements, particularly considering the expected level of traffic for the Tideway Tunnel. However, Notice to Mariners would notify river users of large or non-routine movements. Occasionally, movements of this nature may have a Harbour Launch as an escort.
- vi. Matrix signs were suggested at key points such as Teddington, Richmond and Brentford Locks to inform people of large traffic movements in London. The resources needed to maintain these and ensure the information is accurate would be great. Also, Richmond Lock is a listed structure. Improving guidance at river entry points is being taken forward as a wider project.

6. Events

a. Online Event Calendar

- i. The online events calendar is near completion and is expected to be live in the coming weeks. A Portwide Notice to Mariners will be published to promulgate the location of this online calendar.
- ii. It should be noted that events that require a river closure or Local Traffic Control will continue to require separate Notice to Mariners, which includes the annual Head Closure notice.

b. A list of events from March to October was circulated and is included as **Appendix B**

7. Incidents

- a. Incident review from 1st October to 29th February was circulated at the meeting, and AHMR ran through the review, included as **Appendix A**. It should be noted that this incident review pertains only to recreational craft – wash incidents caused by commercial vessels for example do not feature on this particular review.
- b. The PLA's recent safety bulletin on Lifejackets and Kill Cords was shown to the PHRNG. British Rowing's recent Safety Alerts on being mindful of the fluvial flow and utilising mobile phones in waterproof cases were also distributed. These Bulletins/alerts are available here:

<http://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Safety-Bulletins>

<http://www.britishrowing.org/knowledge/safety/safety-alert-archive/>

8. River Works

a. Central/Navigational Channel Arch Closures at:

i. Hammersmith Bridge

- i. The proposed full refurbishment works have been postponed until 2017. Plans are still unconfirmed and the project has yet to be tendered. PHRNG will be kept informed.

- ii. There will be some disruption to the river, as it is likely a piled structure will need to be placed in the river to support the bridge and/or a working platform. The impacts if this will be carefully considered.
- iii. Local Traffic Control will be in place for works over the main channel.

b. Garden Bridge

- i. There is some possibility of overlap of this project with Tideway Tunnel, due to the start date of the bridge moving backwards. There would need to be an assessment of the impacts of barge traffic considering both projects as part of a cumulative navigational risk assessment. Only after this work is complete can the PLA look at either agreeing the start date of construction.

c. Thames Tideway Tunnel

- i. James Fraser from BMB (Tideway West) was introduced to PHRNG and gave an overview of the current schedule of the Tideway Tunnel West works.
- ii. Start dates for preliminary works, such as the construction of a new temporary slipway at Putney is November 2016. Main works at the western sites will run from December 2017 to the end of 2018.
- iii. At the Carnwarth Road site, it is envisaged that there would be one barge per day tide and one every other night. These would be 1500T barges, with 3-500T barges being taken to the Putney site.
- iv. It was asked whether barge traffic would move mainly during night tides. Overall, a minimum of 50% of the barge movements would be during the night, with an assessment being made on the possibility of 70% of traffic moving during night tides.
- v. James agreed to give a presentation at the next PHRNG, giving some additional information on the western Tideway sites.

d. Nine Elms Reach – Battersea Power Station/Northern Line Extension

- i. Muck away has started from Battersea Power Station, using 1500T barges (approx. 55x12m)
- ii. There are thoughts that the new Crossrail 2 may use the Battersea site for muck away.

e. Baynard House

- i. Arches 1 and 2 at Blackfriars bridges are Closed to Navigation.
- ii. An exclusion zone has been established (NtM M82 of 2016) for sheet piling and dredging, ahead of the installation of the new Blackfriars Pier at the end of 2016.

f. Fulham FC

- i. Marico Marine are currently undertaking the Navigational Risk Assessment for the project.
- ii. The methodology for the construction and barge movements is yet to be finalised there will be no impact on the channel during the works.
- iii. There will likely be a buoyed off area up and downstream of the works, in order to encourage small craft away from the works.

9. AOB

a. Kayak Leader Training

- i. A Kayak Leader Training day was organised 27th February 2016 involving representatives from both local and visiting clubs to learn mainly about the safety aspects of paddling through central London. It consisted of both afloat training from Cremorne to Tower Bridge and back, as well as presentations and discussions at HMS President, with also a Thames Clipper and Lifeboat alongside.
- ii. The day was well received and there was a lot of positive feedback, which will be fed in to future training days to be organised in a couple of years time. There may also be a separate

'upriver' version to discuss paddling in the Upper reaches and their interaction with rowers and other river users.

- iii. A future training day may merge with the launch of the new Paddling Code of Practice.

b. Wheelhouse Visibility

- i. The visibility from some vessels with stern wheelhouses was questioned – some City Cruises vessels and freight vessels such as the Polla Rose for example.
- ii. Thames Clippers and City Cruises have CCTV installed; however the visibility tends to appear worse than it actually is.
- iii. This has recently been investigated as part of a Navigational Risk Assessment Working Group, looking at large vessels through central London. Minimum visibility requirements have been established and this will be rolled out to all vessels

c. Paddle and Pick

- i. Paul Hyman from Active360 described the recent 'Paddle and Pick' - a project which has the involvement of Active360, CRT, Thames 21, Port of London Authority, Thames Estuary Partnership, Tideway and a variety of London paddling clubs.
- ii. This is aimed at raising awareness of plastic pollution, as well as actively clearing up specific areas.
- iii. You can find more information on the project here: <http://www.active360.co.uk/london-paddle-and-pick.htm>

d. Kayak IDs

- i. Photos were circulated around the table of Alex Hester's (Chelsea Kayak Club) recent work on ID stickers for kayaks
- ii. The best was clearly SOLAS tape with letters atop. It was asked if the PLA could provide the SOLAS tape to Thames clubs, while the clubs supplied the letting and numbering.

Action: PLA to write a letter to British Canoeing for their support of this scheme and to agree on a way forward to implement this.

e. Stolen Engines

- i. Darren Knight explained that the MPU are aware of a number of engine thefts on the river. Boat owners are reminded of the need for security of their boats.

f. Vessel Speed – use of logs

- i. A question was asked as to why vessels on the river do not have speed 'logs' fitted to indicate the speed through the water, considering the Speed Limit on the river is 'through the water'
- ii. It was explained that tidal flow modelling gave a good representation of the speed of the river flow and this was used when investigating wash complaints.
- iii. It was asked whether tidal flow modelling data could be available online

Action: PLA to look into providing this data

g. Tree Maintenance

- i. The recent tree works above Putney were discussed and there was resound support of the tree maintenance plan.

DONM: 5th October 2016, 11:00 – 13:30
Pinnacle House, 26 – 26 St Dunstons Hill, London, EC3R 8HN