

RIVER USERS CONSULTATIVE FORUM (LOWER & ESTUARY)

Written Report 01/06/2020

1. PLA Update

General

Following the departure of Tim Corthorn, Miles Featherstone has now taken up the position of Deputy Harbour Master (Lower District) and Paul Lorimer has been seconded from the Middle District to cover the role of Assistant Harbour Master (Recreational)

Incidents

A summary of recreational incidents is attached for the period
May2019-Nov2019 (Appendix 1)
Nov2019-May2020 (Appendix 2)

Recreational

The PLA issued a Portwide Notice regarding Sport and Recreation on the Thames – Covid 19

Recreational Users are reminded that Government guidance may change at short notice which may return to a restriction in recreational activity. As a result, users are recommended to keep up to date with the latest guidance on COVID 19 Restrictions. <https://server1.pla.co.uk/assets/9of2020-sportrecreationonthethames-covid19-may2020.pdf>

River Works

Miles Featherstone has taken over from Tim Corthorn as the point of contact. Numerous River Works projects continue in the Lower District. Many are minor maintenance works, but larger projects include Lower Thames Crossing investigative works, which were expected to continue with further bore sampling jack-ups in June, but has now been postponed and London Gateway grab sampling taking place in June.

River Events

Unfortunately, most planned events have been cancelled due to Covid-19. Paul Lorimer is the new point of contact for River events.

Port Security

The Thames Port Security Authority was due to meet in April for its three-yearly meeting of all the reps, but unfortunately this had to be postponed. If a full meeting cannot be convened later in the year, we will arrange an online meeting.

All river users are requested to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity.

2. Members Updates

a. Border Force – Fiona Craven – Field Intelligence Officer (Maritime)

“BF is business as usual and we are able to respond to anything that people deem to be suspicious.

Our intelligence team generic email is BFtilburyIntel@homeoffice.gov.uk and the 24/7 for public use is 07900056435”

b. RNLI – Jason Carroll, Station Manager, Gravesend Lifeboat Station

“Ready and Prepared to Assist if needed during these strange Times

“Gravesend Lifeboat Station remains fully operational during the current Covid 19 situation, the crew are on station 24/7 ready to respond if needed to incidents on the River and that any requests for Gravesend Lifeboat should be made via London Coastguard by using Channel 16, 999 or through London VTS.

c. RYA – John Green, RYA Representative

“In connection with the cancelled meeting, as the local RYA representative, I'd like to thank the PLA for their support and understanding for leisure users of the river both during the lockdown period and the easing of restrictions now.

You have been helpfully active during the crisis. In particular the notice that was issued in connection with the need to continue with mooring checks was a sensible reminder. It would appear that river users have acted with commendable restraint.”

d. Kent Police – Rachel Marshall, Ports Engagement Officer, Frontier Engagement Team

*“Just a reminder to all that the national threat level for UK, International and Northern Ireland related terrorism is still **SUBSTANTIAL** – An attack is likely. We would ask that everyone remain vigilant and report in anything that they deem to be suspicious.*

Obviously now with the recent lockdown changes there will be some increased activity on the waterways for recreational purposes, others though could be using the waterways with a criminal intention so if anything does look out of ordinary please call it in.

Colin and myself are available via mobile or emails so any concerns please let us know Tel: 07807 340032 rachel.marshall@kent.police.uk”

e. Essex Police – Ian Newling, PC42001925

“I have recently taken over the responsibility as the SPOC for the Thames from the Essex Police side of the water. Contact – ian.newling@essex-police.uk”

f. Trinity House – Captain Trevor Harris, Navigation (Examiner) Manager

Whilst Trinity House have temporarily closed the London office due to the restrictions imposed for Covid-19, we continue to operate fully and carry out all of our statutory tasks. The vessels are continuing to carry out maintenance on the aids to navigation (AtoN) as scheduled and responding to failures within the required timeframes. Our Operational Monitoring Centre is still functioning 24



hours, 7 days a week so the marine users should not see any changes to the service we provide. Although our own working practices have been adapted for remote working, I would still request reports are sent to us if/when you see faults with our AtoN.

Fortunately we have not had any wrecks or incidents to respond to in the area for quite a while now.

The 2020-2025 General Lighthouse Authority AtoN Review has been completed and published on our websites. There are NO changes planned to buoyage provided in the Thames Estuary, unless required due to changes in the bathymetry.”

g. Other – JetStream Tours – Richard Bain, Managing Director

Richard asked whether a virtual RUCF could be held, e.g. via Teams or Zoom, as was recently tried at Medway.

The PLA will intend to do this for the next scheduled meeting if we are still unable to meet in person.

3. Any Other Business

The PLA now issues an online news bulletin about Port and River Operations which can be found:

<http://tidalthames.co.uk/Covid-19-Special-Port-of-London-Authority-News-Week-2-June-2020/index.htm>

4. Date of Next Meeting (invitation to follow via Teams 17.11.20) @ 10.00 a.m.

Monday, 01 June 2020

RUCF (Lower/Estuary) Incident Summary.

Only 2 recreational incidents so far this year due to impact of Covid-19

Date	Summary	Agreed Actions	Severity	Enforcement Action
19-05-2020	Man overboard. RNLI tasked to assist but person recovered by vessel crew. No injuries	Not yet closed	Minor	Not yet closed
02-02-2020	Yacht grounding and unable to return after race	<p>Yacht club agreed to publish a 'lessons learned' document monthly.</p> <p>It was also agreed that Race procedures would be amended to ensure those in difficulty should anchor in a safe position and contact the Race Officer.</p> <p>Vessel owner given safety advice regarding a lack of adequate preparation for the passage and invoiced for the provision of towage services.</p> <p>PLA Harbour Service - Marine River Inspectors Comms Day to discuss Assistance Request Forms and any suggestions on improvements to the process.</p>	Minor	None

Other incidents of note.

Date	Summary	Agreed Actions	Severity	Enforcement Action
18-05-2020	Tug reports parting of two 28mm wires Involved Vessel has passed outwards at the time of the report	Not yet closed	Minor	TBC
22-01-2020	Vessel contact with Dock. The vessel arrived to conduct a stern first approach. At 3 hours into the ebb tide the vessel couldn't hold up to the upper arm and made contact with the lower arm whilst backing into the lock before aborting out.	Port Authority are reviewing possibility of dredging at the Upper arm in January 2020 to see if they can remove more silt outside of the exclusion zone.	Minor	None

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CT training at your kitchen table

Tens of thousands of people across the UK have been undertaking counter terrorism training from their kitchen tables during the lockdown.



And with lockdown measures set to ease in the coming weeks and more people returning to towns and cities, Counter Terrorism Policing need people to return to being vigilant when out and about.

A police appeal to the public, to take part in the Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) e-Learning course while working at home, has resulted in nearly 70,000 signing up to be 'CT Citizens'. Overall half a million participants have responded to the call since the course was launched two years ago.

"It's an incredible number, says Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D'Orsi, national policing lead for Protective Security.

"We wanted to encourage more people to take the course and become 'CT citizens' as it can easily be done when you are working remotely, but the enthusiastic response has been even better than we had hoped.

"With everything people have had to cope with over the past couple of months, we are delighted that they want to continue supporting Counter Terrorism Policing and play their part in keeping all communities safe.

"And it is so important that they do, because as we start to move towards the easing of lockdown, and the return of busy centres of activity, we need to remind everyone that the threat from terrorism has not gone away.

"Having more people with a basic level of awareness, and who know what to do if they see suspicious activity, is a real asset to the police."

The international award winning ACT Awareness e-Learning was developed in partnership with retail giant Marks and Spencer and Highfield Learning.

The interactive course, which is available to companies or private individuals, takes just 45 minutes to complete and can be done all in one go or in short modules.

It explains how to spot the signs of suspicious behaviour and what to do to help yourself, others and the emergency responders if an attack should take place.

To log on and learn, visit:

<https://ct.highfieldlearning.com/>

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