

SAFETY BULLETIN No.4 of 2014

TAKING ACCOUNT OF TIDAL SETS



Recently a narrow boat was proceeding upriver on the flood tide underneath Hammersmith Bridge. As the vessel approached the Dove Pier Starboard Hand Buoy, the Master passed the buoy on the wrong side with the buoy passing down the vessel's Port side. The Master realised that he was then being set down quickly onto Dove Pier. The Master altered course to port across the tide to try to avoid being set onto Dove Pier but was unsuccessful and went athwart of the moored barges on the pier. Fortunately everyone on board the narrow boat was safely taken ashore and the vessel suffered minor damage. Unfortunately there

have been a number of incidents and near misses by recreational vessels at this location over the past couple of years.

It is vital when planning your passage on the tidal Thames to take into account that the river is a fast flowing river with strong tidal sets and currents, especially in bights on the river like the one at Hammersmith. Masters of vessels who are navigating upriver at Hammersmith Bridge and Dove Pier are reminded of the strong tidal set towards the Northern or Middlesex bank, with the very strong potential to be set upon Dove Pier and/or the vessels moored to it. Masters are also reminded to ensure they understand and correctly navigate past navigation marks which have been positioned for their safety.

All vessels are advised to pass underneath the centre of Hammersmith Bridge, between the words "HAMMERSMITH" and "BRIDGE" written in white letters on the bridge parapet. Once through the Bridge, vessels proceeding inward bound with the flood tide must keep to the South or Surrey side of the Dove Pier Starboard Hand Navigation Buoy.



5th September
2014

Port of London Authority
London River House, Royal Pier Road,
Gravesend, Kent DA12 2BG

DAVID PHILLIPS
CHIEF HARBOUR MASTER



Telephone calls, VHF radio traffic, CCTV and radar traffic images may be recorded in the VTS Centres at Gravesend and Woolwich.

www.pla.co.uk

