

Port of London  
Authority (PLA)  
new publications

The tidal Thames or Thames Tideway as it is also known between Teddington and the sea is a busy commercial waterway. The combination of frequent river traffic movements, tides that can flow at up to six knots around bridges and weather can create demanding water conditions. A local knowledge of the Tideway and how it operates is required at all times. The port authority has produced two new publications to assist recreational users:

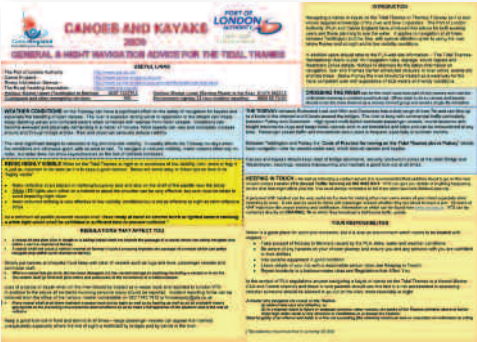
River Thames Recreational users guide –  
Teddington to Sea Reach



This easy to use guide is a two-sided, waterproof map of the River Thames and is a less formal method of highlighting key points for leisure users. Information includes: practical guidance, marine and leisure activity areas, danger zones, vessel traffic services information and port VHF channels, speed limit areas, marina and yacht club information, useful contact details and a summary of local port rules and regulations. Copies can be obtained free of charge. [www.pla.co.uk](http://www.pla.co.uk).

Canoes and Kayaks –  
General and Night Navigation Advice

Canoe England has joined with the PLA and issued advice for the canoeing community on how to use the tidal Thames safely. The advice is available in document format from the PLA web site [www.pla.co.uk](http://www.pla.co.uk) under the leisure/guidance section or as an A3 laminated poster for notice board use. Contact the PLA river manager [alex.brown@pla.co.uk](mailto:alex.brown@pla.co.uk) for a poster. All who navigate on the tidal Thames in canoes are advised to read this document, especially those paddlers who intend to travel at night. The advice also acts as a reminder of regulations, navigation rules, and the local navigation arrangements above Putney for vessels under oars that includes canoes and kayaks.



Marine Conservation  
Zones outlined in  
new draft strategy

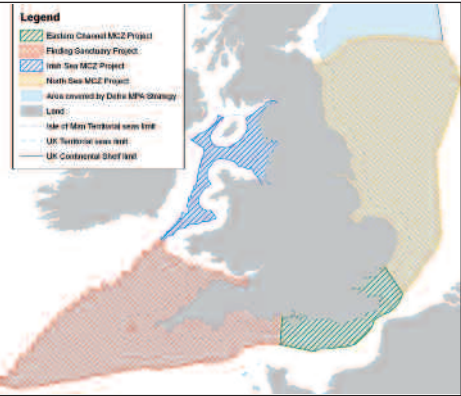
The Marine and Coastal Access Bill, introduced into Parliament in December 2008, proposed the designation of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). The aim is to improve the management and protection of eco-systems and species in the marine environment – spawning and nursery areas, threatened habitats etc and include sites to be designated for features of geological or geomorphological interest

The Department for Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) have released a draft strategy setting out a proposed vision and framework for MCZs. These will be established in territorial waters adjacent to UK offshore waters over the next 10 years and extend to the tidal limits of inlets and rivers.

Details for how the strategy is to be developed and managed are available from the link: [www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/marine-conservation-zones/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/marine-conservation-zones/index.htm). There are implications for recreational activities.

MCZs will be an addition and contribute to an ecological coherent network of Marine Protection Areas (MPAs) formed by - Marine Nature Reserves that will be superseded by MCZs; Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for the protection of habitat and geological features; Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) that include reefs, sandbanks, sea caves; and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated for birds.

Four regional projects have been established for MCZs to cover: Eastern Channel from the Suffolk/Essex border to the Hampshire/Dorset border that includes the Thames Estuary; west of Hampshire and the sea area around to the Severn



Above: The Four regional projects.

Estuary known as the Finding Sanctuary project; the Irish Sea and the North Sea.

Each region will have a project team led by Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee and a stakeholder group involved in the selection of MCZs and the level of protection to be applied depending on the biodiversity objectives. The projects have a tight timetable to produce recommendations for MCZs by Spring 2011.

Canoe England is already a stakeholder member with the Finding Sanctuary project and has attended an introductory meeting for the Eastern Channel project and will be taking an interest in the other projects when they commence.

This strategy does not cover marine areas where nature conservation responsibilities have been devolved, such as territorial waters adjacent to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Environment Agency (EA) continue strategic  
planning for water-related sport and recreation

The EA continues to develop regional strategies for water-related recreation. The third and latest is for the north west of England and commenced with a series of five workshops in June and July at Crewe, Preston, Liverpool, Manchester and Penrith.

Canoe England attended each of these workshops that sought opinions and knowledge from as many people who have an interest in water-related recreation. Access to water and proposals to support the Canoe England Development Plan were high on the Canoe England agenda. Thanks go to Chris Cleaver, NW Regional Access Advisor and the volunteers who assisted him to represent Canoe England.

The University of Brighton are again acting as consultants for the EA and facilitated the workshops. The detail and format of their strategic planning work can be viewed at [www.brighton.ac.uk/waterecreation](http://www.brighton.ac.uk/waterecreation). A plan for the south west has been launched that identified gaps in the provision of facilities and needs of users; that for east of England is in a draft form and preliminary details for the north west are also posted. Canoe England discusses these strategies at [www.canoe-england.org.uk](http://www.canoe-england.org.uk), refer to the access and environment section under consultations.