

# Coming into the Lock

Once you have Tower Bridge in sight contact St. Katharine Docks Marina to update us on your location and estimated time of arrival (ETA). We operate on VHF Channel 80 or alternatively you can reach our dockmasters on 020 7264 5312.

**All vessels must maintain a listening watch on VHF Channel 80 to await instructions and keep a look out for a dockmaster on the side of the lock, using hand signals.**

If you need to wait for the next available lock, you may use one of our 5 yellow mooring buoys, located downstream (east) of the lock entrance. The buoys are suitable for vessels up to 15 metres length overall, and a weight that does not exceed 25 tonnes. If you are stemming the tide (not using a mooring) do not impede any traffic using Tower Bridge Quay or navigating through Tower Bridge. Maintain a listening watch for river broadcasts, done on the hour and half hour (00.00, 00.30) on VHF Channel 68 and at a quarter past and quarter to (00.15, 00.45) on VHF Channel 14.

1

Whilst approaching or waiting to enter the lock, please prepare your lines and fenders. Most boats will be asked to tie starboard side to our floating pontoon, or another boat. The middle of the fenders should be around 1m high from the waterline.



If the lock is busy, you may choose to put extra fenders on your port side. Please stow away equipment on the guardrails (such as BBQ etc) and make sure wind generators will not be a hazard. During busy locking periods, you may be asked to tie to the wall on the port side of the lock. There are bolts and chains on the wall to secure your lines to initially, before transferring your lines onto bollards on the lock side.

In windy conditions, particularly from the south, it is recommended that you have stern line or midships ready as your first line. At all times the skipper is in charge of the vessel and its crew's safety. If there is a high number of boats waiting to come in, please remain patient. We will invite you to enter the lock as soon as safely possible.

# Coming into the Lock

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When all vessels are inside the lock, the outer gate will be raised. There will no longer be wash from the river and movements in the lock will calm down. The lock will then be levelled up to the water level of the marina. If you are tied up on the port side on the wall, be prepared to adjust your lines.

This process may take up to 30 minutes. We make best use of this time and request that one person from each vessel visits Marina Reception to complete a registration form and to receive a map with an assigned berth. Before visiting reception please wait until the water level in the lock is higher and there are fewer steps to climb on the dock ladders.

You do not need to bring anything, except maybe reading glasses!

3

When all vessels are registered and the water in the lock is level with the marina, the inner gate will open and the bridges will lift so you can access/go to your berth.

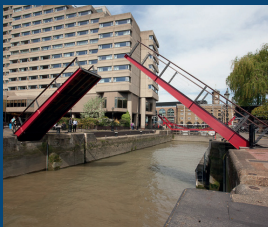
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**All lock times are approximate and may be subject to change, owing to several different factors.**

During high spring tide, locking might be suspended for safety and operational reasons. You will be advised of this as it happens.



[Click here to view locking images](#)



# Coming up the Thames

From the Thames Estuary (Sea Reach No.4 Buoy) it is approximately 45 nautical miles upriver to St. Katharine Docks.

**1**

At Sea Reach No 4 Buoy users should switch from VHF Channel 69 to VHF Channel 68 and monitor London Vessel Traffic Service, call sign 'London VTS'.

**2a**

Inbound vessels from the Estuary, in the area of the Yanlet Channel, use the Yanlet Secondary Channel to avoid large commercial traffic. The Secondary Channel for inbound (upriver) vessels is north of the main Yanlet Channel between Sea Reach No.4 Buoy, and Sea Reach No. 6 Buoy. After Sea Reach No. 6 Buoy, inbound vessels should cross over to the south of the main Yanlet Channel, to East Blyth North Cardinal Buoy, to avoid big commercial traffic using the London Gateway Port and other oil jetties.

**2b**

Inbound vessels from the River Medway, should stay south of the main Yanlet Channel, using the south Yanlet Secondary Channel, which exists for both inbound and outbound yachts.

**3**

From East Blyth North Cardinal Buoy, inbound yachts should handrail the south side of the main channel, passing Lower Hope Buoy and then crossing back over to the north side of the main channel, between Mucking No.5 and Mucking No.7 Buoys. From here, vessels should use the starboard side of the channel.

**i**

Additional care should be taken in the area of Tilbury, where large vessel may be manoeuvring for North Fleet Container Terminal or to enter and exit Tilbury Lock. A warning light, located in front of the Tilbury Ro-Ro Terminal, will flash with a white light to indicate large vessel activity.

From here and Gravesend, it is 24 nautical miles to St. Katharine Docks.

*\*SKD Marina Ltd will not be liable or responsible for any incident occurring as a result of the guidance provided in this document.*

# Coming up the Thames

4

When reaching Crayford Ness, London VTS operates on VHF Channel 14. When passing Margaretness, river users enter the Thames Barrier Control Zone and should contact 'London VTS' via VHF Channel 14 or by telephone +44 (0)20 3260 7711, and seek permission to proceed. London VTS will confirm which 'span' of the Barrier should be used for navigation. London VTS will confirm via VHF Channel 14; which span is to be used for navigation and the spans' piers will be lit by green arrows pointing to the span allocated to a vessel by London VTS. Do not navigate through any span marked with red crosses at either side. In restricted visibility, high intensity white lights will be shown along with the green arrow to indicate which span to go through.

Vessels under sail should use their motor power to navigate through the Thames Barrier.



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The Speed Limit from Margaretness to beyond St. Katharine Docks is 12 knots. It will take around 30+ minutes to get to St. Katharine Docks from the Thames Barrier. This area is a very interesting part of the river, but be aware of other vessels including high speed craft, cruise ships, superyachts and even warships, which visit London. The busiest parts of the river in this area are: West India Dock Entrance, Greenwich, Surrey Entrance and outside St. Katharine Docks.

5

Once you have Tower Bridge in sight contact St. Katharine Docks Marina on VHF Channel 80, using call sign 'St. Katharines' or telephone +44(0)20 7264 5312. Further details on waiting for, or entering the lock, are provided at the beginning of this guide.



Click here for the locking in section

# Coming down the Thames

From Teddington Lock, it is approximately 17 nautical miles to St. Katharine Docks.

1

A half-tide lock and rising weir gates operate at Richmond. To navigate through the area, without having to using the lock, plan to pass through 2 hours before and 2 hours after high water. If you do need the lock, there is a charge, please refer to PLA Tide Tables for current charges. River users should contact 'Richmond Lock' on VHF Channel 80 at Richmond Bridge or call 020 8940 0634.

2

From Richmond, proceed down river, taking extra consideration for the rowers using the river between Putney and Richmond. In certain areas, there are marked secondary channels for rowers to use. Motorised vessel should keep clear of these channels and be prepared to reduce wash when encountering rowers.

3

When approaching Hammersmith and Westminster Bridges, consideration must be taken for arch clearance height and air draft relative to the height of tide. There are 'headway gauges' either side of both bridges, informing the river users of arch clearance height.

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The speed limit between Teddington and Wandsworth Bridge is 8 knots and the speed limit from Wandsworth Bridge to St. Katharine Docks is 12 knots.

Hammersmith Bridge



# Coming down the Thames

4

The navigational arch which should be used to pass underneath a bridge is marked by 2 yellow lights. Arches not to be used for navigation display 3 red lights. A constant flashing isophase light means the arch is being used by a 'reporting vessel' which takes priority, unless you hear otherwise on the VHF. If the light is quick flashing rather than isophase, there is more than one reporting vessel to be aware of.



Open to navigation



Closed to navigation



Isophase Lights (reporting vessels coming through)

i

Within central London there are also two exclusion zones to note. These are alongside the Palace of Westminster (Houses of Parliament) and outside the Security Service (MI6) building near Vauxhall Bridge. The boundary for the Palace of Westminster exclusion zone is marked with yellow buoys. When navigating through bridges be aware of vessels coming away or going onto piers; listen out on VHF Channel 14.

5

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# Radio Channels

The Port of London Authority controls river movements through a Vessel Traffic Service (VTS). London VTS communicates on different radio channels depending on the area of the river under control. When on the Thames it is recommended that you listen to these channels.

Channel 69- VTS Sea Reach 4 outward until PLA limits

Channel 68-VTS Sea Reach 4 to Crayfordness

Channel 14-VTS Crayfordness to Teddington

Please note all vessels on the river will be monitoring London VTS.

# Recommended Publications

PLA Recreational User Guide (Thames navigation chart)

<https://pla.co.uk/recreational-users-guide>



PLA Tide Tables

[www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Tide-Tables](http://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Tide-Tables)

PLA-General Directions

[www.pla.co.uk/assets/generaldirectionsfornavigation2016.pdf](http://www.pla.co.uk/assets/generaldirectionsfornavigation2016.pdf)

Inland Waterways Association (Up and Down Stream versions)

[www.waterways.org.uk/waterways/canals\\_rivers/river\\_thames\\_tidal](http://www.waterways.org.uk/waterways/canals_rivers/river_thames_tidal)



When navigating on the Thames, consider how much wash you are creating for other river users. Be considerate with your speed. If you have any feedback about the information provided in this document, please email us at [marina.reception@skdocks.co.uk](mailto:marina.reception@skdocks.co.uk)

# Coming Into the Lock

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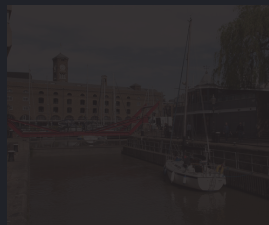
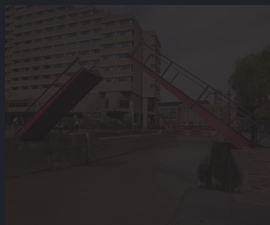
2

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This process may take up to 30 minutes. We make best use of this



1. The water level equal with the river level.  
The outer lock gate down.  
The red footbridge opening.





# Coming Into the Lock



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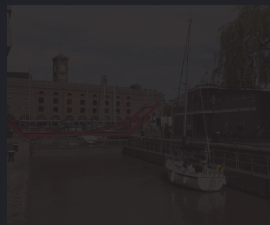
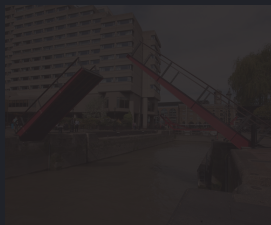
This process may take up to 30 minutes. We make best use of this time to ensure that the vessel is ready for the next stage of the process.



2. A yacht arriving in the lock.



GALLERY



# Coming Into the Lock



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3. A yacht tying up to our floating pontoon.



GALLERY

