The Dredging Liaison Group

Maintenance dredging in the Thames Estuary is an issue of importance to a range of organisations and sectors. The Dredging Liaison Group (DLG) was established by the Thames Estuary Partnership in January 2001. It has been shown to provide an effective, neutral and open forum within which the requirements for planning and implementation of maintenance dredging operations on the tidal Thames can be discussed, and any associated concerns can be addressed.

What does the DLG aim to achieve?

Amongst the objectives of the DLG are the following:

• to highlight, discuss and resolve concerns about the potential environmental impacts of maintenance dredging, and where possible suggest measures to limit any demonstrated impacts;
• to exchange ideas;
• to encourage collaboration and inter-agency co-operation in the discussion of dredging proposals, facilitating the resolution of potential conflicts and offering opportunities for value-added solutions;
• to agree common research needs and methodologies, and encourage, where possible, the sharing of relevant data;
• to promote the beneficial reuse of dredged materials; and
• to further a joint understanding of the hydrodynamic processes within the estuary and how they affect the management of dredging operations.

Since its inception, the DLG has typically met two or three times a year. The PLA is a key partner of the Dredging Liaison Group and has worked closely with other DLG members to develop its environmentally responsible approach to maintenance dredging decision-making in the Thames Estuary.

Since it was established, by working in partnership, members of the Dredging Liaison Group have:
• arrived at a point of consensus on many issues of mutual interest;
• supported the development of initiatives taken forward by the PLA as components of the Maintenance Dredging Framework; and
• played a leading role in pioneering an environmentally sustainable approach to maintenance dredging in the UK.

Dredging Liaison Group members, in alphabetical order, include:

Central Dredging Association (CEDA), Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), Crown Estate, Department for Transport (DfT), Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), English Nature, Environment Agency, Greater Thames Archaeological Steering Committee (GTASC), Kent & Essex Sea Fisheries Committee (K&ESFC), Port of London Authority, Port of Tilbury London Ltd., The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Thames Estuary Partnership (as facilitator secretariat), Van Oord, Westminster Dredging Co. Ltd.